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Revolutionary Christianity

REVOLUTIONARY CHRISTIANITY

BY
SHERWOOD ✓ EDDY



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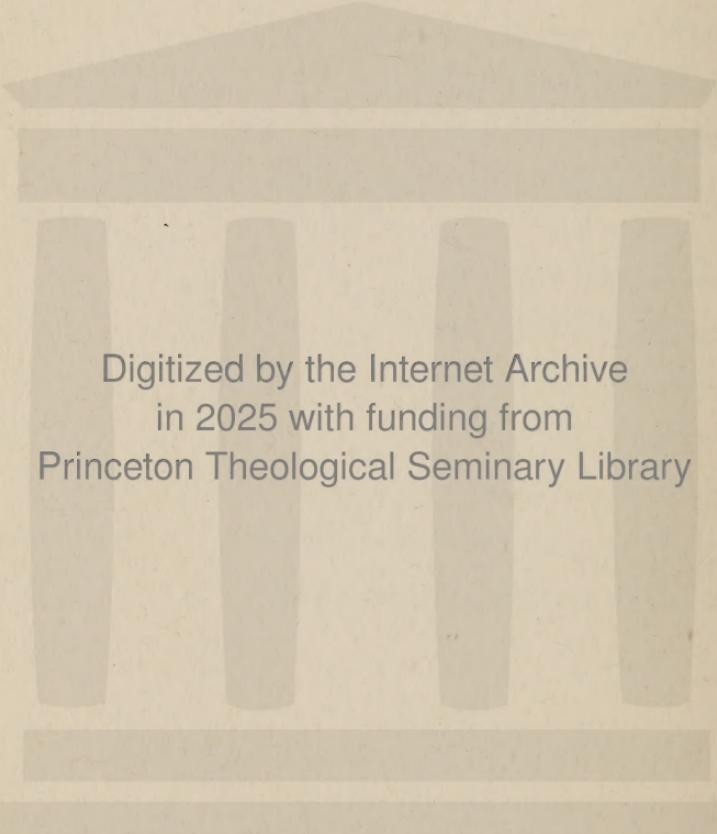
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CONTENTS

FOREWORD	vii
I. WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY?	1
II. THE ORIGINAL SOURCES	27
III. THE APOCALYPTIC ELEMENT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT	40
IV. THE KINGDOM OF GOD	55
V. THE MEANING OF CHRIST	76
VI. BIPOLAR RELIGION: PERSONAL AND SOCIAL	103
VII. EVOLUTION OR REVOLUTION	121
VIII. THE PRESENT WORLD SITUATION	152
IX. CHRISTIANITY IN THE MODERN WORLD	193
X. RELIGION IN A REVOLUTIONARY AGE	209



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FOREWORD

I AM finishing this book in the great garden of the Deanery in Canterbury — where most of it has been written — sitting in the open sunshine amid a chorus of birds. On my right a few yards away is the ancient city wall, whose foundations were built by the Romans about A.D. 200, with the arch of the gateway through which in the sixth century Queen Bertha passed daily to worship in St. Martin's, the oldest church in England. On the left rises this surpassingly beautiful cathedral which has been building for the better part of a thousand years. In my pocket is the key to the private walk of the old abbot, leading to St. Augustine's monastery, built in A.D. 597, whose modern library, now in St. Augustine's College, has been generously opened for daily consultation.

Beyond the garden is the King's School, the oldest institution of higher learning in the Anglo-Saxon world, with its Norman arches older than any college in Oxford or Cambridge. The picturesque houses at the gate are dated 1485, 1493 and 1503; the last being the "Little Inn" where Charles Dickens often wrote. On the eastern city wall with its old battlements, on the opposite side of this garden, a few yards away, is the inscription:

"CANTERBURY, MOTHER OF ENGLAND"
STORMED AND TAKEN IN 54 B.C. BY JULIUS CAESAR
SACKED AND BURNED BY THE DANES IN A.D. 1011
ST. THOMAS OF CANTERBURY
WAS MARTYRED IN THE CATHEDRAL IN A.D. 1170

In this beautiful spot I have been privileged to write, after returning each year from the turmoil of the fascist, communist

and democratic countries — among them Germany, Russia, Spain and Czechoslovakia — with Europe on the brink of possible war.

But, alas, it takes more than the inspiration of such an environment to enable one to write. Many of the books brought over from St. Augustine's College library have furnished suggestions. A number of the authors I had known during the war or after. First came the works of Adolf Harnack, whom many of us learned to love as we met him year by year in Berlin. They define Christianity in terms of the nineteenth century liberalism which to most of us seems so inadequate today. Then came the works of Burkitt, Streeter, Schweitzer, Moffatt, Kirsopp Lake, Foakes-Jackson, McGiffert, Bacon, Scott, Dodd, Cadoux, and, finally, Reinhold Niebuhr and John Macmurray, to whom my debt will be evident throughout this book. I am specially indebted to Clifford Stanley for critically reading the manuscript and offering valuable suggestions for alterations and additions.

I have been privileged almost daily to discuss the themes raised in the book with the Dean of Canterbury, whose generous hospitality made possible the writing of it. More than almost anyone he has unconsciously exemplified the title of the book and incarnated realistic religion in a revolutionary age. A former engineer, a socialist, a friend of the poor, he did not allow his position as a dignitary of the church in its most ecclesiastical diocese to prevent his championing the cause of beleaguered democratic Spain and of the workers of the Soviet Union, especially when they were most in need of it or were misrepresented by reactionary propaganda. In an age when the church has so largely failed and has come into ill repute in many lands in the estimation of the masses, it is heartening to find one whose work is held in such affection by the workers, even though it has been condemned by ecclesiastical officials.

The dean, Dr. Hewlett Johnson, stands in the great succession of revolutionary Christians since the day of his Master. In the old cathedral lies the body of his spiritual predecessor, Stephen Langton, archbishop of Canterbury, whose tomb bears the

record: "Scholar, saint and, above all, champion of English liberty. His courage inspired the nobles to wrest from King John the Great Charter." He and the martyred Thomas à Becket who lies near by, like all revolutionary Christians for nineteen centuries, were concerned not only with theological matters pertaining to a future world but with the political, economic and social implications of justice, liberty and the abundant life of the Kingdom of God on earth here and now.

The first chapters of the book, which was begun in 1936, take up the historic evolution of religion and were first thought of under the title, "What is Christianity?" The last chapters were written amid the stirring events of the recent crisis in the growing conviction that we are entering upon an epoch of war and revolution that will change the face of the world.

The closing words of the book are being written as Adolf Hitler is about to deliver his address at Nuremberg, which may seal the fate of Czechoslovakia. If Hitler takes Czechoslovakia by force, or by the threat of invasion and world war, it will mark a new epoch and force a new alignment of the powers in Europe. It will change the world. When in Prague a few weeks ago I wrote: "I found Czechoslovakia the brightest spot in Europe, as the last democracy east of the Rhine. Today this brave little republic is the last barrier that has kept Hitler from subjugating as a colony the sixty-eight million people of the Danubian and Balkan states clear to Constantinople. If Hitler broke four promises in the rape of Austria, how could Czechoslovakia trust him now?"

We have witnessed the successive sacrifice of Manchuria, Ethiopia, Spain, China and Austria. If now Czechoslovakia is sacrificed in the great retreat of the democracies before fascism it will tend to drive the wavering nations like Poland and Rumania into the orbit of Hitler and isolate Britain and France in the west and Soviet Russia in the east. It will divide the democracies and unite the fascist aggressors. Such a sacrifice would not be a settlement but a vast unsettlement. It would lead not to confidence and disarmament but to a fresh race in

FOREWORD

armaments. It would postpone, but make more inevitable, a world war upon terms much more unfavorable to the democracies. It would delay international hostilities but hasten the more terrible class war into which a world conflict will quickly be transformed. It is in the growing conviction of the approach of war and revolution that the closing chapters of this book have been written.

SHERWOOD EDDY

Canterbury, September, 1938

I

WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY?

IT IS now forty years since Harnack delivered his brilliant lectures in Berlin on *What Is Christianity?*¹ After stripping off the husk of later accretions he believed that he had found the essential kernel of this faith in the following statement: "The Christian religion is something simple and sublime; it means one thing and one thing only: *Eternal life in the midst of time, by the strength and under the eyes of God.*" Although there was in the lectures much that was then fresh and stimulating, almost no one today would be satisfied with this definition. For one thing, it defines Christianity without any reference to Christ himself, who is, and must be, the very heart of it. With very slight alteration this definition would serve almost as well for the religions of early Egypt, whose quest was for eternal life under the eyes of the gods.

Harnack, as the great pioneer of nineteenth century liberalism, wanted to get back, beyond the later Pauline theological religion *about* Jesus to the simple religion *of* Jesus himself — living by faith in God, teaching the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man and ushering in a new evolutionary spiritual order. This view conveniently stripped off as far as possible all extraneous doctrinal and miraculous elements and offered men something rational and simple to believe. But nineteenth century liberalism failed to preserve the full dynamic of early Christianity. We must radically amend Harnack's definition, for we do not find that Christianity consists in "one thing and one thing only."

Christianity lives and grows as a vital organism. It has the inherent power of perennially needed reform, of renewal and even of spiritual revolution. But it remains the unique and distinctive religion of Jesus. He was both the crucified Messiah of the Jews, with a religion forever centered in sacrifice, and the light of the Gentiles, as Christianity continually appropriated much that was best in various cultures.

When Christianity separated from Judaism as a new religion and its message and organization gradually became world-wide, it appropriated or gathered up what was most akin to itself from Greek philosophy, the mystery religions of the Mediterranean, Roman law and organization, and the national cultures of its multiplying converts. In its appropriation of new truth there was usually real gain, but also, in almost every case, inevitable loss and dilution. As it came to terms with Greek philosophy and culture and was modified and fructified thereby, so later it was forced to come to terms with modern science and its civilization. This resulted in both cases in the atrophy or withering away of the superstitions of an unscientific age, such as animistic beliefs in a demon-possessed world. But often also there was the loss of enthusiasm. Like every other great religious movement Christianity passed through the stages of the deep emotional experience of discovery, calm rational restatement and volitional organization.

On the one hand it was polluted and rendered sterile wherever it compromised with the evils of the age — the autocratic state, slavery, the war system, feudalism, capitalism and imperialism, with each of which in turn its followers were all too often identified. But it was also enriched and developed by the appropriation of new truth, which had been promised as its enlarging inheritance under the guiding Spirit of God. At the heart of it as a living organism is a vital evolutionary principle, a self-developing spiritual impulse with appropriative capacity. Its center and norm is found in the historic Jesus and the eternal "spirit of Christ" which it derived from him, which becomes the test and touchstone for the assimilation of new truth. Thus

the quickening spirit of faith was "once for all delivered," but not its ever widening content.²

Christianity survived as a world religion, despite the depths of degradation to which nominal Christians at times sank, not only because of its central core of truth, but because of its capacity for change, adaptation and adoption of new truth. This element of syncretism, or the combination of new truth with old, and the capacity to assimilate the new, is characteristic of practically all higher religions, but especially of Christianity.³

The average layman thinks of Judaism as a revelation contained in the canon of the Old Testament Law and prophets, and of Christianity as given once for all and completely in Christ. As a matter of fact, however, both Judaism and, to a much greater extent, Christianity as a world religion, are in one sense syncretistic. Later Judaism after the captivity, when over half the Old Testament was written, borrowed much from Babylonian, Persian and Greek sources.

There is a sense therefore in which Christianity is, and one in which it is not, syncretistic. If we define syncretism as "the effort to reconcile and unite various systems of philosophy or religious opinion on a basis of tenets common to all," Christianity has often done this, but more frequently it has refused to do so if it compromised its position. It was a stream fed from many tributaries. It absorbed truth akin to itself in every environment through which it passed. It combined especially the contributions of Hebraism and Hellenism. What we call Christianity has passed through several major epochs of change and development.

We shall now attempt briefly to define the religion of Jesus himself⁴ just before the crucifixion, say before A.D. 30; next, Christianity as it would have been defined by the apostle Paul about A.D. 60; then the conception of the three writers of the Synoptic Gospels about A.D. 80 and the major ideas of the writer of the Fourth Gospel as a Hellenistic Jew in Ephesus about A.D. 100-10. Then will follow the definition of Christianity

held by the Roman Catholic Church from the first Council of Nicea (325) and the contribution of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, the conception of this religion of the reformers from Luther to Calvin (1517-64), and Harnack's definition and the ideas of nineteenth century liberalism arising out of seventeenth and eighteenth century rationalism. Finally we shall seek to define Christianity today, gathering up the principal strands of truth and the contributions made in each of these epochs, and omitting the vestigial survivals of each, such as the expected second advent on the clouds of heaven within the generation of the synoptic writers.

This is a difficult and probably overambitious task. Nor can any of us escape some measure of personal bias. The experience and conceptions of each individual will necessarily differ from those of others, and there will be not only seven, but more than seventy times seven differing definitions of Christianity in the minds of believers of various schools of thought today.

THE RELIGION OF JESUS

The religion of Jesus consisted in absolute faith in God as Father, expressed in love to man. God, in fulfillment of the promises to Israel made through the prophets, the Law and the apocalyptic seers, is about to set up his Kingdom, or rule on earth in a new age, through the Son of Man, God's Anointed. Jesus proclaimed to men this reign of God as now at hand and already in their midst in himself, and its final consummation as about to be realized. He envisaged the completion of human society and brotherhood in the Kingdom of God. Rejected by the Jewish authorities, he voluntarily went to his death in absolute obedience to the will of God, as the Suffering Servant of Jehovah.

When we endeavor thus to make a statement of the religion of Jesus, we immediately feel its utter inadequacy. It is like a cold skeleton from which the warm flesh and blood and the throbbing heart have been removed. We feel that something vital has been left out. To realize what this something is, we

would wish to read into the record the whole Sermon on the Mount, Jesus' unique yet undefinable character, and finally the achieved human goodness of his real humanity — in short, the whole content of the word "God." If all this could be added to our statement those who have personally known Jesus would feel that his religion was the revelation in humanity of the very heart of Reality itself.

But when all was said, or written, one would be left with the realization that Reality can never be confined or defined, or compassed by a word or phrase or by the straitened limits of human language. What are words save symbols, sign-posts to the path or way of life that can never be told but only lived, never defined but only experienced?

The followers of Jesus realized a new type of life in a new spiritual age. They were bound together by the common confession of the name of Christ as Messiah. "There were officers but no fixed offices, a common father but no creed, a common life but no rules." There was abundant life at its maximum. There was a minimum of all else, of restricting formalism, verbalism or legalism, of organization, creed or convention. Such was the radical religion of Jesus, "a prophet mighty in deed and word," centered in the single message of the Kingdom of God.

CHRISTIANITY IN THE CONCEPTION OF THE APOSTLE PAUL,
ca. A.D. 60

After his volcanic inward experience, Paul might have stated the essentials of the new "way" of life he had come to know as follows: True religion, as the fulfillment of the Law and the prophets, is the experience of life in Christ, who is the risen Head of the living members of his body, the church. God was in Christ, crucified and risen, as the Messiah of the Jews and the Savior of the Gentiles. Thus by God's own divine act of at-one-ment he forever gives himself to man in uttermost love, revealing himself as Father and reconciling the world unto himself that he may set up his rule in Christ, ultimately to be restored to himself as all in all. This good news of the costly re-

demption of God is offered as a free gift to simple faith, or utter trust in Christ, calling each and all to repentance or a complete change of life, to the acceptance of God's free gift of salvation and wholehearted commitment of life to Christ and his cause.

Within thirty years we have already passed far beyond the simple gospel of Jesus to the more developed gospel *about* Jesus. Pauline Christianity has passed from the theocentric religion of Jesus himself to the Christocentric religion of the early church. The center of emphasis is not now the life and teaching of the historic Jesus but his person and work. The followers of Jesus are no longer a Jewish sect but members of what is becoming a new and universal religion. This religion is thoroughly evangelical, yet two simple sacraments have been introduced, safeguarded by Paul from the influence of the magic and superstition which were to creep in later from the mystery religions. The Kingdom of God is still in the dim background, but the church, as the agency for the promotion of the rule of God on earth, is in the foreground. Throughout the Roman Empire Paul and his fellow evangelists are founding churches as centers of the new type of life. All life is now summed up and centered "in Christ"—crucified, risen and coming again.

Paul was the one man in the world who had the background of Jewish training, Roman citizenship and Greek culture which enabled him to stand at the center of things. More than any other he interpreted the significance of Jesus, he planted the church in the Gentile world, he severed it from Judaism and the bondage of the Law, and thus helped to found the universal religion which was finally called Christianity.

He who had stood by at the stoning of Stephen had been challenged and shaken. In agony of mind he had been trying to determine who that crucified Galilean really was, for under the Law, "he that is crucified is accursed of God." Suddenly he was met with such an inward revelation of "his Son in me," and an outward radiance that seemed of such overwhelming reality, that he believed he was instantly and forever faced with the fact of the risen, living Christ as the chief spiritual force at work

in the world. But if God was in Christ and Jesus was a crucified Messiah, then there was involved a transvaluation of all values and a revolution in his conception of God, of man and of destiny.

It is Paul chiefly, as the first Christian theologian, who thinks out the implications of Jesus' person and work as crucified Messiah and risen Lord. It is our belief that the main stream of Christianity flows from Jesus to Paul and that the apostle was fundamentally right in his major interpretation of it. But he was not infallible. He was narrow in many of his judgments, unfair in his sweeping condemnation of much that was best in Judaism, wrong in his immediate expectation of the second advent (especially in his early epistles), primitive in his view of a demon-possessed world, and sometimes, as in his estimate of womanhood, unworthy of his Master. Uniquely inspired, he was yet always and everywhere human and limited.

When he speaks to a Philippian jailer about to commit suicide and sums up the gospel in a lightning flash, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," it is a stroke of inspired genius. But it also comes very close to a dangerous half-truth. Paul himself had passed through the agonizing discipline of the Law, and held an adequate view of God, of sin and of Christ. But all through succeeding centuries, especially under the evangelical emphasis of Protestantism, it was easy to hang a whole theological system on a single text and to offer a cheap and easy "salvation" through a mechanical transaction accepted by mere intellectual assent or verbal acquiescence or emotional excitement. This sometimes became a travesty and caricature of the real gospel which the apostle would have been the first to condemn.

When all is said and done, Paul remains the world's chief missionary and martyr, "the greatest human being that ever followed Jesus Christ."⁵ "He laid the foundation of Western and Christian civilization." As Dr. Jefferson says, "he kindled conflagrations wherever he went. He filled synagogues with commotion and set cities blazing. . . . John Chrysostom wrote

a memorable sentence when he said of St. Paul — ‘Three cubits in stature, he touched the sky.’”⁶

Professor B. W. Bacon concludes: “Surely the doctrine *about* Jesus, interpreting the significance of his person and work as the culmination of redemption through the indwelling of God in men and among men belongs as much to the essence of Christianity as the gospel of love and faith proclaimed by Jesus.”⁷

CHRISTIANITY IN THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS, *ca.* A.D. 80–90

In the Synoptic Gospels Christianity is conceived as the new way of life made possible by the historic Jesus, who is the Christ or Messiah of the Jews. Jesus by his life, his teaching, his sacrificial death and resurrection has proclaimed the Kingdom of God which is about to be realized in his second advent from heaven, before which all men should repent, accept the rule of God in their own hearts and live in hope of the realization of the reign of God on earth and in the life beyond.

The emphasis in the Christianity of this apostolic and synoptic period moves between the two focuses of the historic Jesus and his expected second advent. Round about Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus and Rome, little communities of Christians are multiplying, linked together in the common confession of the name of Christ. The church is still only embryonic. Its spontaneous liberty sometimes borders on license in a period of “pneumatic” or spiritual anarchy, as in the church of Corinth. Later centuries idealized the apostolic period as a golden age of faith, and sought in apostolic tradition precedents and forms to bind their own thought and practice, but fortunately the apostolic age was for the most part fluid and uncry stallized. It was still the period of the first fine, careless rapture of spontaneous and abundant life.

CHRISTIANITY IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL, *ca.* A.D. 100–110

According to the writer of the Fourth Gospel eternal life is now offered as the gift of God to man. “God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son,” who was pre-existent,

ent with God, that whosoever believed in him as the object of faith should not perish but have everlasting life. This life is entered through a miraculous spiritual new birth, symbolized by the water of baptism and nurtured through the spiritual partaking of the body and blood of Christ in the sacrament. Christ *has* come once for all, and there is to be no second advent on the clouds of heaven. Men have been judged already by his coming, and are called to believe and obey him by entering at once into eternal life. Christianity is Christ. In the conception of the writer of the Fourth Gospel, in which Christianity was formulated, regardless of all facts in the life of the historic Jesus, Christ is the absolute truth, the eternal "I Am,"⁸ the Way, the Truth, the Life, the Light of the World, the Door, the Good Shepherd, the pre-existent Logos before Abraham was, the Son of Man, the Son of God, the Bread of Life, the Fountain of Living Water within, the True Vine, the crucified, glorified Lamb of God, the Resurrection and the Life — God incarnate in man.

Thus seventy years after the crucifixion the emphasis has been shifted from the Kingdom of God and the second advent of the Synoptic Gospels to the incarnation and to eternal life as a present individual experience under the guidance of the Spirit. While salvation was from the Jews it is now stated in Greek and universal terms for the Roman world. The historic background has shifted from Jerusalem in A.D. 30 to Ephesus after A.D. 100. The union of Hebraism and Hellenism has begun. Christianity is acclimatized; it is in the world but not of it. The revolutionary religion of Jesus and the idea of the Kingdom of God are in process of becoming the conservative sacramental theology of the later church. Let us look back and compare this fourth conception of Christianity with the three preceding ideas.

In the Synoptic Gospels life depends upon conduct, upon moral obedience; in the Fourth Gospel it depends upon a sacramental act. From the second century to the Protestant Reformation Christianity is prevailingly sacramental. As to how this

great transition took place we have no record. Indeed but two books of ecclesiastical history were written between the crucifixion and Constantine's Edict of Milan; namely, the *Acts*, and Eusebius' *Church History* in the fourth century. Within the framework of the Christian church, however, a new civilization was forming as the old civilizations were disintegrating about it. The New Testament writings are a contemporary record of a great spiritual movement in which the history of mankind took a definite turn and made a new beginning.

The spiritual life of the second century Christian community is still almost as beautiful as that of the first, which is thus described in the familiar Epistle to Diognetus: "Christians are not differentiated from the rest of mankind either by country, language, or customs. . . . Every foreign land is their fatherland and every fatherland is foreign. They marry like all other men and beget children, but they do not expose their offspring. They share a common table, but not a common bed. They are in the flesh, but do not live according to the flesh. They abide on earth, but live as citizens of heaven. They obey the established laws, and in their own lives they surpass the laws. They love all men and are persecuted by all. They are unrecognized, and yet they are condemned. They are put to death, and they have an increase of life. They are poor, yet they bestow riches on many. They suffer the want of all things, and they superabound in all things. They endure indignities, and they are glorified in their indignities. They are slandered, and they are justified. They are abused, and they bless. They are scoffed at and they show reverence. While they perform good deeds they are punished as evildoers. When punished they rejoice as attaining unto life. They are warred against as aliens by the Jews and are persecuted by the Greeks, yet those who hate them are unable to state the cause of their hatred. In brief, what the soul is to the body Christians are to the world."

There is here no lost radiance of the revolutionary religion of Jesus. It has not yet become the reactionary religion of later centuries.

CHRISTIANITY IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, A.D. 325-1500

From the fourth to the seventh centuries Christianity is officially conceived as the religion of Jesus Christ, who himself founded the Catholic Church on earth as his visible body. He is held to have entrusted to the twelve apostles the tradition which was defined later in the ecumenical creeds, and to have constituted the order of bishops under the headship of the bishop of Rome as the successor of St. Peter, to whom he committed the eternal destiny of men by bestowing on him "the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven."⁹ Salvation is now held to be found in the only true Catholic Church, through its priesthood and its sacraments,¹⁰ which center in the mass, the repetition of the sacrifice of Christ, who is miraculously present in his veritable body and blood.¹¹ According to the creed of Athanasius, "whosoever will be saved before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic faith. Which faith except everyone do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlasting-ly."¹²

Faith, instead of being personal trust, has now become correct intellectual opinion. The emphasis has been shifted to the visible church as the Kingdom of God on earth, under the pope of Rome. Thus within three centuries the prophetic radical religion of Jesus has become the reactionary religion of a sacerdotal hierarchy with fixed creeds and miraculous sacraments.

To bridge the gulf that separates the ancient and medieval from the modern world we must recall the contributions made by Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. We cannot appreciate the abiding elements of value in the church universal apart from Augustine (A.D. 354-430). Many believe that he contributed more to the essence, the definition and the theological substance of Christianity than anyone else since New Testament times. He was the great creative figure of the Catholic Church and the chief architect of the Middle Ages.

Augustine lived in a time of social disintegration when the classical civilization of pagan antiquity was dying and the new

Christendom had not yet arisen. Ours is a like period, for Christendom has been disintegrating since the Renaissance. The various elements of life have become separated from one another and from any ultimate center. Hence skepticism and a sense of frustration prevail. Augustine shows such a period as ours how men may rise above chaos and live, by anticipation, in the age which is to be, and indeed help to create it.

Greek philosophy was emancipating in its effect, but it ended in skepticism. The Greek development issued from a religious basis, but it was finally severed from its creative roots and withered away. In opposition to this intellectual autonomy, Augustine more than any other laid the basis of civilization in revealed religion. He related existence, thought and life to the revelation in Christ. Thus the mind was saved from skepticism, the heart from world-weariness, the will from impotence. The Christendom of the Middle Ages was a working out of the Augustinian synthesis between religion and life. The medieval period must always be understood against the dark background of the debacle of Greek autonomy. Since the Middle Ages were built on revelation and authority, one can see readily why their chief problem was the relation between authoritative revelation and reason.

It was an accident of history that Augustine did not know Aristotle, but that accident robbed both him and the age which flowed from him of scientific interest. Aristotle represents the empirical method. Empiricism proceeds on the basis that there is some independence and objectivity in things. For Augustine, however, creation is continuous and thus things are not independent of God. In the last analysis things are known from within; they are known by knowing God, and the knowledge of them is a knowledge of God. If the weakness of empiricism is the external quality of its knowledge, the danger of Augustine's approach is that it makes the object unreal. This accounts for the otherworldly character of the Middle Ages and the haze of unreality which overlay the material world.

Augustine lived when the moral dissolution of a decadent

civilization was far advanced. He himself experienced this distortion of natural relations and activities and found himself helpless in face of it. In the Christian society alone, in the community of grace, was there moral victory. Hence Augustine saw no moral competence in the natural man. The virtues of the heathen were but "splendid vices." As self-love was the sole sin, so love was the sole virtue. This love was the gift of God through immediate relation or through the sacraments. The gift of love was the gift of God's own self and was bestowed only where God chose, by predestination apart from all virtue, since there was no human virtue.

Thomas Aquinas (1225-74) stood at the summit of medieval Catholicism and gave to it its final classical formulation. After Augustine, Aristotle was discovered by the West and St. Thomas represents the incorporation of his objective and scientific point of view into the Christian development. The most significant thing about Aristotle was his attempt to overcome the sharp dualisms of Plato with a system of development. Thomas took this as the philosophic expression of the medieval world in which all things were graded and close-knit. In doing so he rejected Augustine's dualism between nature and grace. Ironically enough, his great statement of the unity achieved by the Middle Ages was the first step in the breaking of that unity.

The relation between reason and revelation in Thomas' system was not the same as in the thought of Augustine. For Augustine, everything is revelation on the one hand and can be explained by reason on the other hand. Every reality is in God and is known directly through the direct touch which the soul has with God. For Thomas, some things are known only by revelation and some things by unaided reason. Thus both reason and revelation are independent, but revelation is higher and completes reason. Here the influence of Aristotle is evident. The things which are due to revelation are the Trinity, creation, original sin, the resurrection, the sacraments, judgment, eternal life. Reason can show that these are not antirational and can refute attacks on them, but cannot produce them.

According to Thomas Aquinas unaided reason can discover many things; particularly it can demonstrate the existence of God. This idea represents a fall from the Augustinian position in two respects. First, while revelation is not antirational in the thought of Thomas, it is accepted on a faith which is authenticated not by reason, but by authority. This was the turning point. Shortly after, Duns Scotus denied that revelation has anything whatever to do with reason. In later centuries many rejected the authority, and since the idea of the reasonableness of revelation had been long emasculated, the revelation was itself disbelieved. Second, Thomas made reason at least semi-independent and competent in a limited realm. This idea was carried further in the Renaissance, and in the Enlightenment man became fully autonomous and independent. Once the religious basis of knowledge is destroyed the internality of knowledge goes and skepticism is at hand. This was the fate of antiquity; it will be the fate of our time.

Nor does Thomas follow Augustine in the matter of grace and righteousness. For Augustine, the natural man is unable to be virtuous. If Augustine's theological rigor reflected a situation where the only morality was in the church, the easy confidence of Thomas reflected a victory so complete that tension could be relaxed. But it was a fatal concession. Thus if Thomas is the last word of an age of faith, he is the first word of an age of independence, of godlessness and of meaninglessness.

In the Roman Catholic Church of today the religion of Jesus has been changed from a way of life to orthodoxy of belief, from a gospel of salvation by faith to a miraculous mass resembling and in part derived from the early mystery religions with their magical sacraments. Salvation is now practically confined to one true Catholic Church and its infallible head.¹³ The whole dogmatic, sacramental and hierarchic system of the later centuries is supposed to have been delivered by Christ to his apostles and by them to their successors. The church is the infallible guardian of the whole system by her "collective memory" of all that Christ said, and its appeal is always to the

past, not to the future. It holds the Catholic tradition against the corrosive action of rationalism and liberalism. It emphasizes integrity, continuity and universality. It has changed almost beyond recognition from the simple religion of Jesus and the evangelical interpretation of Paul, to a vast religious empire, a mixture of sublime truth and superstition, ever producing both saints and worldlings. It is both feudal and hierarchical, hidebound to the creeds and the credulity of medievalism, and though sometimes deeply concerned in matters of social justice it is theologically reactionary and antimodernist.

CHRISTIANITY IN THE REFORMATION, 1517-1564

The Reformation might be defined as an effort to return from the corruptions of the later Catholic Church to the primitive gospel of salvation by faith, with the direct access of each individual believer to God. The Reformation repudiated the doctrine of an infallible church and substituted as a rule of faith and practice a virtually infallible Bible, the result of verbal or plenary inspiration. Individuals, churches and nations now became divided on a basis of extreme individualism. They largely lost the sense of social solidarity and the idea of the church as the instrument for bringing the Kingdom of God — a new spiritual and social order — on earth. In general, the Reformation regained the individual but lost the social aspects of the original gospel of the Kingdom.

The emphasis had now shifted from development to origin, from the church to the Bible, from social solidarity to individual responsibility, from the coming of the Kingdom of God to the salvation of the individual soul. As Luther turned from the peasants to the princes, so later Protestantism, while emphasizing the evangelical offer of immediate salvation through the acceptance of the atonement of Christ, often abandoned the world to sink in its sea of capitalism, imperialism, militarism and perennial war. Like Catholicism, it was a mixture of truth and error, often of individual truth and social error. It was sometimes worldly and sometimes otherworldly.

The Protestant Reformation was the religious and political revolution of the sixteenth century, a movement seeking to clear away the false accretions of the centuries and to return to primitive Christianity. It resulted in the partial disruption of the Western Catholic Church and the establishment of various national and denominational churches. The Reformation followed a long series of ineffectual attempts at reform in the Middle Ages and the revolt of Wyclif and Huss over a century before Luther. There had been a growing protest against the corruption and perversion of the church. These evils had culminated in the sale of indulgences, which were the occasion of Luther's nailing his ninety-five theses on the church door at Wittenberg (October 31, 1517). Luther followed Paul in reasserting the doctrine of justification by faith alone, the liberty of the Christian man, the right of private judgment and the priesthood of all believers.

The reformers held that though the church was corrupt, the Kingdom of God existed within ordinary society as an invisible organism, working as leaven through all human relations, civic, economic and social. Luther's burning of the papal bull was a revolutionary act against the entire hierarchical and priestly system of Rome and all its "divine rights," against all formal external authority in religion, against the material sacramentalism of the mass, the exclusive claims of the pope, the double standard of morality for clergy and laity, and the corrupt practices of the monasteries and the priesthood.

But the Reformation destroyed the unity of Western Christendom and civilization, shattering the churches into subdividing sects. It retained the three ecumenical creeds and much of the old catholic tradition. It kept some of the evils and lost some of the values of the church catholic. The Reformation was an effort to turn from materialized and magical sacramentalism to the early evangelical tradition. It lost, however, much of the church's sense of social solidarity and responsibility. With its right of private judgment and its reduction of religion to the direct access of the individual to God, it unwittingly

emphasized an excessive individualism that later prepared the way for laissez faire capitalism and the monstrous evils of economic anarchy. The Church of Rome often remained in alliance with decaying feudalism, while Protestantism and Puritanism became the religion of the rising capitalism of the bourgeois states. From the time that Luther turned his back on the peasants and workers in the Peasant Revolt of 1525 and aligned himself with the princes, saying: "Have no pity on the poor folk; stab, smite, throttle, who can," the Protestant churches increasingly became those of the prosperous middle class and of the rich, while the ranks of organized labor prevailingly turned against the church.

England was an exception and never had a thoroughgoing revolution, political, economic or social. The Church of England was unique in that, broadly tolerant, it remained both Catholic and Protestant, both sacramental and evangelical. The Anglo-catholic high churchman retains the Catholic tradition and the creeds, belief in episcopal orders and apostolic succession, the "reserved sacrament" of the mass; while the Anglican Protestant stands for the whole evangelical tradition of primitive Christianity. Strangely enough, however, it is often the Anglo-catholic in England who is a fearless socialist and fights the battles of the poor for economic justice, while the evangelical is sometimes an individualist with little interest in social problems.

The Reformation had a second good effect in that it led also to the Counter Reformation and to much needed reform and cleansing within the Church of Rome itself under the self-sacrificing zeal and educational policy of Loyola and others.

Men are either predominantly conservative or liberal. The conservative is called to see the good aspects of prevailing reality and is often blind to the defects of the present. The vocation of the liberal is to see the shortcomings of the *status quo* and to dream of a better day. Religion reflects both vocations. The religious conservative is the sacramentalist. For him God is primarily the sanctifier of that which exists. The religious

liberal is the prophet. His is the call to criticize the present in the light of a better future. In his eyes, God is a pillar of fire by night and of cloud by day, leading to the land of promise. It is plain that neither of these types is ever found to the complete exclusion of the other. The danger of sacramentalism is that it relaxes overmuch and "waxes fat." The danger of prophetism is that it becomes too tense, too fanatical, arid, isolated, and finally too humanistic. In the Middle Ages the sacramental aspect was developed at the expense of the prophetic. Catholics then were and now are too complacent about the Christendom of medieval times. The fact that it was overthrown shows that many people did not consider it to be the Kingdom of God. Protestantism is the religious aspect of this great revolt which included the bourgeois revolution and, indeed, extends to our own time. In this sense Protestantism must be regarded as an attempt to restore the prophetic aspect to Christianity.

CHRISTIANITY IN NINETEENTH CENTURY LIBERALISM

We saw that in the view of Harnack, as the representative of nineteenth century liberalism, Christianity when reduced to its lowest rational terms is "eternal life in the midst of time, by the strength and under the eyes of God." It is the religion of Jesus as teacher and example, going about doing good, proclaiming the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man and finally dying a martyr's death. Jesus, when stripped of all apocalyptic and miraculous elements, becomes our eternal contemporary. We are called to follow his example, apply his principles of love and brotherhood to life, and thus gradually educate and leaven society in the optimistic hope of the evolutionary development of a new social order.

This view suffers from the enervation that accompanies all rationalism. It is often accompanied by a somewhat pale and nebulous view of God, a shallow sense of sin and of human nature and need. Jesus is often reduced to the lowest terms of a merely good man, a mistaken Galilean peasant.¹⁴ There is usually neither adequate personal dynamic nor adequate social

passion. As the heir of nineteenth century liberalism, twentieth century humanism would often have to leave out the first and last words of even Harnack's inadequate definition of Christianity, "eternal" and "God." We should then have left "life in the midst of time and under the eyes of" — what?

Humanism is a very elastic word. It includes both theistic and atheistic connotations. The entire bourgeois culture of the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries was humanistic in the sense that its primary emphasis was upon human dignity, capacity and potential virtue. Beginning with the Renaissance the dignity and the goodness of man were frequently set in opposition to Christianity because it was felt that the latter emphasized too exclusively either the sinfulness of human nature or man's weakness in relation to God.

There have always been varying emphases among the humanists, however. Some have inclined to naturalism and have sought to understand man primarily in terms of his relation to nature and in his social and historic setting. At times the naturalistic element in modern thought tended to depreciate the uniqueness of man and his distinction from other creatures. Another emphasis, derived from Greek interpretations of human nature — whether Platonic, Aristotelian or Stoic — has emphasized man's unique endowments as a rational creature and his dignity and greatness as a person possessing self-consciousness and freedom. It was this emphasis which dominated Renaissance thought in such men as Leonardo da Vinci, Bruno, Erasmus and Thomas More. It is this type of humanism which Paul Elmer More and Irving Babbitt sought to revive in America a decade ago. The leaders of this school held a rather equivocal attitude toward religion, maintaining on the one hand that they could divorce all the values of humanism from their traditional relation to religion and on the other hand expressing doubt whether humanism without religion could long survive. It is significant that the more naturalistic variety of humanism is so much part and parcel of our whole culture that these more classical humanists were laughed out of court.

We cannot blame a naturalistic humanist for trying to preserve the aesthetic and other values of a religion which has lost its God. But for us *vital religion stands or falls with God*. If there were no God, and we were compelled to face a materialistic, godless universe with no intelligence or purpose behind it and no spiritual goal before it, we would be driven to a position similar to that of Bertrand Russell. We would face the strange contradiction of a majestic, ordered, evolving universe that was merely "the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms." We could only contemplate "the vast death of the solar system . . . buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins." On man "the slow sure doom falls pitiless and dark. . . . Only on the firm foundation of unyielding despair can the soul's habitation be safely built."¹⁵

But no worthy habitation of the soul ever has been or ever can be built on a foundation of despair. We should have more respect for a realistic and optimistic faith like that of Marx. We cannot deny the term "religious" to such a faith as that of Bertrand Russell or Karl Marx, or to the atheistic creed of Southern Buddhism, or to any phase of naturalistic humanism which considers itself religious. Our only contention here is that whatever else these things are, *they are not Christianity*.

The realistic Jesus said: "By their fruits ye shall know them." Judged either as ideal or as real, in the tragic failure to realize its sentimental idealism, is not this type of religion weighed in the balance and found wanting? This is not to reflect upon the character or intelligence either of liberals or of left-wing humanists who desire to retain the aesthetic values of a religion without God. In the light of Jesus' supernatural idealism, or of Marxian materialism, which is actually building a new social order, however crude and ruthless, must we not in all candor admit that this type of Christianity has failed? Is it either a gospel or a dynamic? Are we not merely deluding ourselves — for certainly we are not convincing the world — with a false hope that will never be realized?

It is our conviction that real Christianity has not failed. We

must admit, however, that it is special pleading to say that it has never been tried. Why has it not been tried? Has there been something the matter with it or with us? Before we attempt our own definition of Christianity we confess in advance the inadequacy and futility of mere verbal definition. The world will never be saved by definitions or creeds. Life can never be adequately defined. It must be triumphantly lived or incarnated, as the world becomes flesh.

WHAT, THEN, IS CHRISTIANITY?

Christianity begins with the religion of Jesus, having its origin and goal in the conception of the Kingdom of God on earth. Jesus' way of life is entered by faith and growingly realized by love. It embraces the two great commandments, as the fulfillment of the Law, the prophets and the teaching of Jesus: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," and "thy neighbor as thyself."

The Kingdom of God involves both spiritualization and socialization, or the full sharing of all life with God and man. It is ever bipolar, inseparably personal and social. It is bifocal, including the religion "of Jesus" and that "about Jesus." It is primarily and ultimately theocentric, forever centered in God. But secondarily, for those who are able to receive it, in the temporal sphere of redemption it is Christocentric; it focuses in Christ crucified, in the incarnate Son of God, in a truly human and therefore limited and fallible historic Jesus.

We turn forever from an apocalyptic consummation on the clouds of heaven to the abiding center of our religion in the Kingdom of God, temporal and eternal. This Kingdom, first, last and solely, we seek, increasingly to extend its influence as the invisible rule of God on earth in all spheres and relations of life, economic, political and social as well as religious, for all life is one and all is sacred. Thus we appropriate from Jesus the idea of the Kingdom of God — and Jesus himself. From Paul broadly and freely we take the interpretation of Christ's person and work, though for many of us it is never infallible.

From the Synoptic Gospels we inherit the priceless picture of the historic Jesus, and from the Fourth Gospel the significance of the eternal Word made flesh.

Rejecting all magic, superstition and sacerdotal or papal infallibility in Protestant protest, we yet seek to be genuinely catholic, or universal, in sacramental worship, interpreting from Christianity's central eucharist all nature and life as symbolic and sacramental. And yet we would be completely evangelical in the joyous living and proclaiming of the good news of the free grace of God, ever offering costly forgiveness to repentant man. We accept the core of truth in historic Hebrew ethical monotheism, but also that in Hellenic philosophy with its eternal quest of the true, the good and the beautiful in the realm of values. Though ever on our guard against its dangers we accept the necessity of organization, believing in the church as necessary in so far as it fulfills its function as the fallible means of promoting the eternal spiritual realm of God on earth.

If we look back across the nineteen centuries it is apparent that Christianity has had to make two major adjustments as it came in contact with secular cultures. The first was with Greek civilization, the last was with modern science.

We have already seen that it had to fuse into a higher unity the two great streams of thought, the Hebrew and the Hellenic. Alexander's hope for the "marriage of Europe and Asia" was thus partly consummated. To this higher synthesis universalized Judaism chiefly contributed the social ideal in its messianic hope of a Kingdom of God on earth, while Hellenism contributed the individual ideal of the full development of personality.

The second major adjustment that Christianity had to make was with modern science. It is pathetic to trace the opposition of the ecclesiastical hierarchy to almost every science as it arose. That was partly because the radical religion of the far-sighted prophet, eager for new truth, had been transformed by the ever conservative priest, with his fixed dogmas and creeds, his vested interests in institutional religion and his frequent alli-

ance with the worst evils of the secular order. The bitter warfare between science and theology was unnecessary. The word "science," derived from the word "to learn" or "to know," suggests no necessary conflict in a field of human experience that is supplementary to religion.

Three times religion has had to make a major adjustment with modern science. In the sixteenth century it had to alter its view of the universe because of the discoveries of Copernican astronomy. In the nineteenth century it had to revolutionize its view of creation and of nature in coming to terms with Darwinian evolution. Today it is having to make the far more important and perhaps more difficult adjustment to the modern science of economics.

The discoveries of Copernicus (1473-1543), though bitterly assailed by both Catholics and Protestants, overturned the smug little Ptolemaic solar system and opened a new universe to man. Darwin's discoveries of the laws of nature shattered forever the old notion of fixed creation of species, and opened before mankind the vast sweep of evolutionary progress. But for revolutionary religion it is far more essential that we should perceive the economic basis of our whole modern civilization than that we should understand the distant stars or the origin of species.

Economics is a matter of our daily bread and of our basic relations with our fellow men. It is not, as originally thought of, merely a science of wealth, of money and machines. It is a psychological science concerned with human behavior. It deals with the communal problems of material life as the basis of all the indivisible life of man.

Adam Smith wrote of the *Wealth of Nations*. Marx was the conscious economist of the poor. He was a sociologist to whom nothing human was foreign. Like all men, he had his limitations, but he was consciously or unconsciously the prophet of the impoverished of all humanity. Amos and Jesus had flamed with indignation over the condition of the poor: "They sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes; they pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor."¹⁶

"Blessed are you poor! But woe to you rich folk!" "Every-one of you who will not part with all his goods — he cannot be a disciple of mine."¹⁷

Marx reflected upon the heavy burden of suffering humanity and laid a scientific economic foundation for man's deliverance from poverty. He declared that the poor were at last to inherit the earth. We reject Marx's idea of religion and his violent methods. But unfortunately, just when we need his economic interpretation to understand the present world situation, many still look upon him with deep aversion and some even with horror, as their contemporaries did upon Copernicus and Darwin. But God is swiftly educating the world today, not only by abstract ideas but by concrete events. The God of history is writing our lesson unmistakably in skies which are "red and lowering." We must seek to discern the signs of the times, the meaning of this era. That is the purpose of our study of revolutionary religion.

Under the guidance of the spirit of truth we accept all the experimentally validated findings of modern science as part of our heritage of essential Christianity. We thus conceive of Christianity as a living, growing organism, always assimilating and combining new discoveries of truth with the old and tried. If this is so, *all things are ours* — the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; in religion, philosophy or science. As those who would be humble followers of Christ, we would repent of the personal sin which does so tragically beset us, and challenge the social sins of our present social order of "the mammon of unrighteousness." Finally we bow before Christ as the Lord and Master in whose humanity we worship our God and Father. We would rise up at his call, "Come and follow me," and passionately seek to live and die for the establishment of the Kingdom of God, for a new social order here and now on earth.

NOTES

¹ The German title of these published lectures was *Das Wesen des Christentums, or The Essence of Christianity.*

² Ritschl thus defines the Christian religion: "Christianity is that monotheistic religion wholly spiritual and ethical, which, based upon the life of its author as redeemer and as the founder of the Kingdom of God, consists in the freedom of divine worship, involves the impulse to active conduct from the motive of love, aims at the moral organization of mankind, and lays the basis of bliss in sonship toward God as well as in the Kingdom of God."

³ Thus Buddhism was based upon Hinduism, as Christianity was upon Judaism. Hinduism was almost wholly syncretistic as it was the amalgamation of all the indigenous religions and cults of India bound together by the social system of caste, including primitive animisms, local cults, polytheisms and polydemonisms, theism and higher pantheism. Confucius was confessedly only a compiler of the ethics, social philosophy and religions of ancient China. Islam was based upon Judaism, traditional Christianity and the religious experience of Mohammed.

⁴ This we derive from the earliest sayings of Jesus which we shall study in the next chapter.

⁵ T. Glover, *Paul of Tarsus*, p. 197.

⁶ Charles Jefferson, *The Character of Paul*, pp. 370-81.

⁷ *The Making of the New Testament*, p. 54.

⁸ Exod. 3:14, "I am that I am."

⁹ Based on Matt. 16:16-19; Luke 22:32; John 21:15-17.

¹⁰ Defined as seven sacraments in A.D. 1135 and by the Council of Trent (1545-63). These work *ex opere operato*, automatically conveying grace if received with proper disposition.

¹¹ The mass is "the sacrifice of the true Body and Blood of Christ upon the altar . . . in which God receives the sacrifice of his only-begotten Son." (*Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. X.)

¹² In the *Encyclopedia Britannica* the Roman Catholic Church is thus officially defined: "The church instituted by Jesus Christ is the visible society of men who, having received baptism, are united in the profession of the same faith and in one communion and are seeking the same spiritual end under the authority of the Roman pontiff, the successor of St. Peter, and the bishops who are in union with him. . . . Men are bound to submit to its [the Church's] authority . . . such submission is necessary to salvation."

¹³ Cardinal Newman in his *Arians of the Fourth Century* bewails the heresy of all but a score or so of the bishops who had embraced the

heretical Arian formulas, when the truth was held not by the majority but by "Athanasius against the world." In the church of that period Newman finds "the Latins committed to an anti-Catholic creed, the pope a renegade, Athanasius wandering in the deserts, Arians [heretics] in the sees of Christendom and their doctrine growing in blasphemy."

¹⁴ In this judgment we are not reflecting upon the monumental scholarship or the fine Christian character of Harnack himself, to whom many of us are forever deeply indebted, but rather upon later nineteenth or twentieth century liberalism and humanism, often optimistic but relatively impotent.

¹⁵ Bertrand Russell, *A Free Man's Worship*, pp. 46 ff.

¹⁶ Amos 2:6.

¹⁷ Luke 6:20, 24; 14:33 (Moffatt's translation).

II

THE ORIGINAL SOURCES

THE SOURCE OF PRIMITIVE RELIGION

MAN seems to have risen in the scale of being by a four-fold activity and achievement — in social organization, in science, in art and in religion. It is true that man can exist without organized religion, without art or science, or even without much social organization. But if he does it is at the cost of denial or degradation of life, without the realization of its highest possibilities.

The problem of the origin of religion is a tangled one over which experts violently disagree. We cannot trace religion to one simple, single source. Psychologically, it is not merely the result of intellectual speculation or aberration, of emotional experience or delusion, or of practical prepossession. It cannot be traced solely to primitive animism or "the belief in spiritual beings," to totemism or the relation between a group and a natural or artificial object, to belief in *mana* or mystic impersonal power, to magic which is the effort to control immutable laws of nature by mechanical action. An adequate explanation of religion is not found in negative fear, in dreams or ghosts or human ancestors, nor solely in that element in life which may be designated as the sacred, embracing the mysterious, the secret, forbidden, potent or immortal.

Religion is ineradicably rooted deep in normal human nature. Primitive religion is almost the whole of man's concrete life. There are no peoples, however primitive, without magic and

religion, and none, however advanced, without science and religion, though certain totalitarian states are trying desperately to crush free autonomous religion. Religion centers and grows about all the vital acts and experiences of life — about birth, puberty, marriage, sex, family life, food-getting and harvest, as well as about hunger, frustration, sickness, suffering, and especially death, the supreme and final crisis of life, of which the savage is intensely afraid. The idea of death leads finally to its denial in the conception of immortality, as man reaches belief in spiritual continuity, in life after death and in the spirit as independent of the body.

Dr. Malinowski writes: "Belief in immortality is the result of a deep emotional revelation, standardized by religion, rather than a primitive philosophic doctrine. Man's conviction of continued life is one of the supreme gifts of religion, which judges and selects the better of the two alternatives suggested by self-preservation — the hope of continued life and the fear of annihilation. The belief in spirits is the result of the belief in immortality. The substance of which the spirits are made is the full-blooded passion and desire for life, rather than the shadowy stuff which haunts man's dreams and illusions. Religion saves man from surrender to death and destruction and in doing this it merely makes use of the observation of dreams, shadows, and visions."¹

Though there is much superstition and evil in primitive religion, its beneficial result is the consecration of life, the stimulation of the will to live and do, to realize all the almost infinite potentialities of man's being. Religious faith establishes and enhances valuable mental attitudes such as reverence for tradition, harmony with environment, courage and confidence in the struggle against difficulties, and the early beginnings of the biologically useful virtues of faith, hope and charity. Religion bestows on man the gift of mental integrity; it develops individuality, personality and character, a sense of duty and a deepening ethical life; but also it creates the sense of social solidarity, kinship and brotherhood.

No early form of religion ever discovered is the origin of religion. No matter how early the form may be, it does not answer the question, Why should there be any religion, whatever its form? Following Aristotle, we may say that the later stages of a process are more significant for the understanding of it than are the earlier. Oak trees tell more about acorns than acorns tell about oak trees. Early superstition explains neither religion nor science. Both were responses to objective reality. In any genuine process there are no complete changes in which the essence is radically transformed. Since high religion is essentially trustful confidence, early religion was probably not exclusively fearful. Again, since high religion is essentially supplication and dependence, early religion cannot have been merely magic, since magic is domination and manipulation by man.

Religion is what it purports to be, namely, a relation. A relation implies two or more *relata*. In this case, one of them is the divine (supernatural, sacred or holy). No science can deal directly with the holy, for science is confined to nature. Nevertheless no understanding of a relation can be useful which ignores to any degree either of the *relata*, particularly the more important. We understand the nature of man through this relation; and by the same token the relation yields knowledge of the divine, by which in turn we understand the relation which religion is.

Assuming for the moment that God and man both have being (which means ultimately to be capable of having relations) and that they possess their being in the same universe, then relationship would not require explanation but the lack of it would. If these two had set up no relations, then we would have a problem, Whatever kept them apart? On the other hand, they are together today wherever religion exists. Every historical century bears witness to this great experience. Such universality of occurrence suggests a universal cause. If both God and man truly are, then such a vital relation is inevitable. But God and man are not on the same plane. God, the divine,

is wholly supernatural, whereas man is a child both of the natural and of the supernatural.

This peculiar juxtaposition of the natural and the supernatural is what we mean by man. Man has religion. It is truer to say man is religion. The origin of religion is the origin of man. Man is a being of thought, will, feeling. Earliest man thought little; he was primarily an organism of feeling and action, yet he utilized at least a little of all three elements. It can be shown readily that feeling, or action, or thought, presupposes freedom. Freedom is this life in two realms, natural and supernatural. A mechanical entity is completely submerged in nature. Its changes of motion studied by physics are solely from without, as nature dominates. A biological entity operates through instinct. Instinct is the organism's own law.

But when we have freedom nature is defied. A stimulus enters. The stimulus-response is broken by deliberation. The response which issues may be from freedom, that is, from within entirely. Now the possibility of that break mentioned above is the realm of freedom. That is, we have a realm of independence in the face of nature. Whence is this ability? Does it not bear witness to another command — a "yes" which is not nature but supernature? The command of God sets man free from nature. When nature says "no" and supernature says "yes," then man is forced to choose, and in being so forced he is made free. So man is carved out from nature, but it is clear from this that the birth of man and the birth of religion, or of its possibility, are one.

If this is true it shows what a holy thing humanity is and why pure humanism is such an inadequate account of man. It shows why the direct, conscious, explicit relationship with the divine is so essential to life, so "biologically necessary." Humanity is thus the type of existence which is capable of religion (i.e., direct, conscious, explicit relation with the spiritual, the divine, or supernatural) and which because of its origin and nature must have such a relation to thrive or realize its full life. Religion came with man and man came with religion. Such a view

is a religious view of the origin of religion. It takes its clue from the greatest manifestations of religion, the deepest insights into the divine and the most universal characteristic of man, which is freedom. Once the principles of the origin and development are in hand one turns to the concrete evidence to find the earliest and the whole series of forms of the later development of religion.

The source of religion then is not fear or faith; it is not emotion, thought or will; it is not dreams or visions, but *God himself*. It originates in the initiative of God, in objective reality. Because it has a high source it has also a high destiny. Groping man stumbles out of darkness into light, out of ignorance, error and superstition into truth. In primitive magic man seeks the control of nature for practical ends; in primitive religion he seeks the propitiation of superior powers. Magic finally culminates in science and religion in the finding of God. But the road is long and rough and the way is dark.

A man must make his choice between a materialistic and a spiritual interpretation of the universe. He feels with Herbert Spencer that "we are ever in the presence of an infinite and eternal energy from which all things proceed." But what is the nature of that energy? Is it like matter or like mind? Is it like the lowest or the highest that we know? Many of us, like Charles Darwin, refuse to believe that the universe is the work of chance.

Taking the lowest common denominator in modern experience, we might define religion as a belief in the nature of life or the universe which cannot be scientifically proved but which leads to a corresponding way of living. Perhaps both Christianity and communism would come within the scope of such a broad definition, however much the communist may abhor or repudiate the very word or idea of religion.

At the beginning of our experimentation we might think of religion as the effort to bring the whole of experience into the light of the best that we know and to organize our experience in loyalty to that best. Religion ideally is the whole man seeking

the whole of life. It is the highest loyalty to the supremely worthwhile, to the best there is for all mankind. Something is required to account for the universe, something which creates, sustains and promotes the higher possibilities of value — the true, the good and the beautiful — realized in the relations of love as the full sharing of life. Now those functions imperatively needed in human life are being actually realized in a body of sharable experience, capable of repeated verification from individual to individual and from age to age.

Our modern word religion is of doubtful origin, but it is probably from the Latin word *religio*, meaning "to bind." In the end it may prove to be the threefold uniting bond which binds man to the center or source of life, which we may call God, to himself in achieving a unified, integrated personality, and to his fellow men in the cooperative endeavor of the community to build a new social order. In any event the common experience of man has given birth to religions of extraordinary similarity all over the world.

Early religion always begins as a social function. Man is both a social and a religious animal; he therefore finds social satisfaction in the meeting of his psychological needs in religion. In and through the group he finds a sense of kinship, or *kindship*, which gives him power, emotional satisfaction and drive. While one with the group, he is strong and happy; isolation means exile, excommunication or punishment. He escapes from his conflict and distress only in reuniting with the group again.²

Mr. Gerald Heard and others find an early manifestation of this social function in fertility religions with their food-getting rites. We have next the development of the matriarchal and patriarchal religions. Under the former motherhood was worshiped; this culminates in matriolatry, the worship of the Great Mother, or of the Mother and Child, which reappears with many other primitive forms in medieval Catholicism.

Then follow two developments in dialectic opposition, the erotic and the ascetic, each overemphasizing a half-truth in human nature. Sex asserts itself in religion later than the hunger

motive and food-getting rites, but erotic manifestations and fertility cults are widespread and powerful in early Hebrew, Greek and practically all other religions. All through the Old Testament there is fierce opposition to the sensuous rites of erotic religions with their sacred pillars, the phalli, "on every high hill and under every green tree." This opposition culminates in Hosea, whose wife was one of the band of "holy" women connected with the now sensualized and debased public worship.³

In extreme reaction against the erotic element, the ascetic powerfully manifests itself in rejecting life. Restraint leads to starvation. Since the ascetic must deny life here he is compelled to dream of a future life of individual reward for abstinence from sin conceived as lust. The victim of fear, the ascetic seeks to escape from life, and *merely* to save his own selfish soul in personal survival after death. This is a departure from both the social origin and the social goal of religion. Asceticism in certain mystics like Francis of Assisi is not always selfish, however, and the idea of personal immortality appears very early in primitive religion.

The isolated individual who finally emerges from asceticism is usually self-seeking, and this force tends to disrupt society. Extreme individuality is an abnormal psychic condition. Such an individual is lonely and unsatisfied, often feverishly seeking satisfaction in drugs, in sex, or in religion as a false opiate. The individual without the beloved community may become an orphan, or an outlaw, or seek escape in this life or the next in the "holy selfishness" of asceticism.

State and church tend later to become specific organizations. As they become more powerful and less spiritual both state and church depend more and more on force, and war becomes the chief destroyer of society. Men always attribute superhuman virtues to their conquerors when they despair of themselves. Finally, dictators arise who threaten all the cooperative, unifying and international elements of the social order.

False religion, which puts the individual to sleep with the

promise of a selfish salvation only in another life, is an opiate or drug, but creative religion, which unites the individual with his community and through it with life, may be a mighty dynamic and a powerful social reagent. Such religion would furnish the chief clue to cultural and social evolution. Thus religion not only gave birth to art, but it inspired it and brought it to its highest culminations in the sculpture of Phidias in Greece, in the religious painting of the old masters during the Renaissance, and in the great Gothic cathedrals as the consummation of architecture. Through magic religion gave birth to science, and every major scientific advance has been succeeded by a religious development.

When the individual is finally isolated, when man's nature divides into the subjective and objective and he is crushed and starved in isolation under the heartless economic state, to escape from himself he sets up a social religious organization, the church, that he may again find social salvation.

We may find the survival of the old fertility religions in modern greed and mammon worship, the primitive erotic and emotional incitement in modern mystical revivalism, and the result of early asceticism in the competitive individual seeking solely the selfish salvation of his own soul and abandoning his fellow men to sink in a sea of poverty, in slums which breed crime, in social injustice intensively and extensively far worse than the prophet Amos condemned twenty-six centuries ago. This is a prostitution of religion as low as the lustful and erotic worship of temple prostitution condemned by the prophets.

THE EARLY SOURCES OF CHRISTIANITY

If we take up the New Testament a superficial glance seems to reveal four early Gospels, or narratives of the life of Jesus, which appear to be almost contemporary histories written by his immediate followers, followed by later letters or epistles. But more than a century of patient research by scholars, who have devoted a lifetime to these documents, has resulted in a very different conclusion. Instead of four Gospels, we find

two principal documents or primitive sources, and five later "Gospels" which are based upon the earliest oral tradition and upon the first two written records.

The first of the two earliest documents consists of the sayings of Christ committed to writing on perishable papyrus. The second is the simple narrative of the events of the life of Jesus as recorded by Mark, in its first edition.

A study of our present Gospels of Matthew and Luke shows that both closely followed the narrative and order of Mark, copying whole sections from his earlier work, and that both also used another written document which contained the sayings of Jesus. The consensus of modern scholars finds convincing evidence of such an early document, or documents, to which the name of *Q* (from the German *Quelle*, "source") has been given, and to which we shall refer as the Sayings.

Let us suppose that the period from the birth to the death of Christ covered approximately the first three decades of the Christian era. The next decade, from A.D. 30 to 40, would be occupied with the events recorded in the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles. This period would witness the spread of the new movement along all the principal highways of the Roman Empire to northwestern Asia, southeastern Europe and North Africa.

Following the short life and tragic death of Jesus, there had been an overwhelming experience of a new life in the early Christian community. In the excitement of the day of Pentecost men had come together to ask what had happened. Peter stood up informally to explain it. The expansion of the oral explanation then begun was continued in the writings of the New Testament. The sayings of Jesus were probably gathered up and recorded in more than one center and copied for the use of the principal churches, such as Jerusalem, Antioch, Caesarea, Corinth and Rome. Based mostly upon the "double tradition" of these two major sources, the Sayings and Mark, and to a lesser extent upon the separate material utilized by Matthew and Luke, five Gospels emerge, differing very widely but supplementing

and casting light upon one another in a very remarkable way.

These five are, first, the writings of the apostle Paul, who repeatedly speaks of "my gospel" and states it in no uncertain terms in his many epistles; second, our present Mark, which bears evidence of much material added to the original by a later hand or editor; then Matthew, Luke and John. Provisionally, we may roughly date these writings somewhat as follows:

The collection of the Sayings would probably have been made between A.D. 40 and 50. Most of the epistles of Paul would fall between A.D. 50 and 60, our present Mark after 70; our Matthew was probably written in the Jewish wing of the church, between A.D. 80 and 90, Luke and Acts about the same time in some Gentile church, and the Gospel of John, as we shall endeavor to show, much later, between A.D. 100 and 110, probably in the Greek and cosmopolitan center of Ephesus. Thus these events and the documents that record them cover more than the entire first century.

If the reader will take a harmony of the Gospels, with the first three Synoptics before him in parallel columns in chronological order, and note the sayings of Christ found in both Matthew and Luke, and then the account in Mark, he will be astonished. These early writings seem to be, as it were, all of one piece, from a single stratum, to represent the sayings and doings of an identical period and to move within a common and consistent circle of ideas. If we read through them at a sitting we are startled to find that they all consistently deal with the development of a single theme, and that this is not what we would have expected it to be. The central figure in these earliest records is not that of the Jesus of nineteenth century liberalism, of a great teacher or rabbi discoursing upon the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. He is not a moralist, for he proposes no system of ethics. He is not primarily an evangelist intent on saving individual souls either by a correct theological formula or by a sacerdotal sacramentalism. He is not the "gentle Jesus meek and mild" inculcating the passive virtues, but more often a stern figure who has come

to cast fire on earth, rending families asunder and making fierce onslaughts upon the religious leaders of his time. As it must have disturbed the majority of his hearers at the time, so his message startles us if we really grasp it.

The twenty sections of the Sayings and Mark march straight to the climax of Peter's confession, "Thou art the Christ!" After slow centuries of hope long deferred comes the volcanic proclamation of the ascetic Baptizer in the wilderness, a gaunt figure calling the whole people to abject repentance, typified by the humiliation of the rite of baptism. The chosen people are to flee from the wrath of a consuming fire which is "even now" almost upon them, and to prepare for an imminent Coming One.

In the midst of this resurgence of prophetic religion, aflame with a fresh flaring up of the age-long national hope, Jesus suddenly appears. He is no professional prophet, priest or king, but a simple Galilean carpenter with hands hardened by toil, only yesterday earning the daily bread for his widowed mother and her large family. If he is the anointed Son who is to deliver his people, *how* is this unprecedented and humanly impossible end to be achieved?

In the wilderness Jesus rejects one by one the morally impossible means which suggest themselves. There is the clamant demand for miracle, for magic and the use of might, or for yielding to the lure of a mere palpable materialism, to the worldly use of wrong means which would inevitably defeat the divine end, or for pandering to the popular expectation and appealing to his people as a spectacular Messiah. Truly the hungry poor needed bread; surely, somehow, the kingdoms of the world must be transformed and won; and certainly the expectant people needed a messianic deliverer. But one by one each natural and powerful appeal is withheld.

He must not only seek God's great end — the Kingdom, or rule of God — but he must seek it only by God's means, in his time and way, as the spiritual instrument of the divine purpose. While the temptations are broadly human and therefore appli-

cable in all human circumstances, they are here only intelligible as temptations to One who now feels imperatively called as the long-promised deliverer, the anointed, the mysterious Messiah, fragmentarily promised in multiform and contradictory phrases and roles by a long line of prophets and apocalyptic writers, whether as warrior king, Son of Man, or Suffering Servant.

Beginning at Nazareth he is fulfilling messianic prophecy. From Capernaum he must press on with terrific urgency to proclaim that the rule of God is at hand. The great sermon from the Sayings seems the Magna Carta of the coming Kingdom. That is the theme of the very first verse. The realm of God is immediately at hand for the poor, persecuted common people. Jesus' messianic mission, which seems to the rulers so revolutionary and destructive, is the very fulfillment of the Law and the prophets. The great prayer in Luke contains practically one single petition: "Thy reign begin!" Matthew adds as an explanation, "that is, thy will be done on earth."

The climax of Peter's confession, "Thou art the Messiah," forms the basis of Jesus' final disclosure that he is to be a crucified Messiah, a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Gentiles. In spite of the hope of the early Galilean springtime the opposition of the religious leaders now makes his death inevitable. But that is to be the means God will use for the coming of the Kingdom in power. Jesus sends out the disciples with the proclamation of its speedy coming. Although in him it has come already and is even now in their midst, the great consummation will be like an instantaneous flash of lightning across the heavens. In the very last of the Sayings he has gone "to receive for himself a Kingdom and to return" in blessing and in judgment.

It is a single theme — the Kingdom of God — that runs consistently through all the twenty sections of the Sayings and Mark. The original good news in the earliest, most authentic sources was wholly revolutionary and prophetic. Only later did revolutionary prophetic religion become the reactionary religion of priests in defense of the *status quo*.

NOTES

¹ *Science, Religion and Reality, a Symposium*, p. 50.

² See Gerald Heard's *The Ascent of Humanity, The Social Substance of Religion, The Source of Civilization*. Köhler found even among apes and chimpanzees, with minds approximating that of a child two years of age, that the group was dominant as a psychological unit. Separation or excommunication meant the keenest distress with passionate cries to be reunited with the others. There were rudimentary manifestations of many elements which enter into primitive religion as it develops later as a social function in man.

³ King Josiah massacres the holy men and holy women devoted to erotic worship. The Roll of the Law now appears in opposition to the emotionalists' symbols, with its covenant, argument, ethic, theology and the later constitutions of mankind.

III

THE APOCALYPTIC ELEMENT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

WE BELIEVE that Jesus, as a constructive spiritual revolutionary, was primarily prophetic in his message, "a prophet mighty in deed and word," not an apocalyptic seer nor an ethical teacher. But to understand the Synoptic Gospels and their messianic hope of a Kingdom of God on earth, we must realize their apocalyptic and eschatological background.

The Jewish people developed in turn three principal forms of literature, the prophetic, the legal and the apocalyptic, each covering approximately three centuries.¹ Most of the apocalyptic works were produced between 200 B.C. and A.D. 100, including both earlier Jewish and later Christian works. Many of the former are a connecting link between the Old and New Testaments. The apocalyptic writings include and fall between Daniel in the Old Testament and Revelation in the New.

We must beware of prejudice against this form of writing which is so alien to the modern scientific temper. It was a development as natural and inevitable as the prophetic or legal. The term apocalypse means an "unveiling" or "disclosure," and its catastrophic view of history dealt with eschatology or "the last things." The apocalyptic writings were a great light of hope shining out in the darkest times to save men from pessimism and despair. The burning issue of this later period was to explain the goodness and sovereignty of God and his purpose in history in the light of the humiliation of his people,

who had in turn fallen under the crushing yoke of Babylon, Persia, Syria, Egypt and Rome.

The apocalyptic writers were the natural successors of the prophets. The prophet was a preacher speaking to his own age, calling men to repentance in view of the ultimate Day of the Lord. The apocalyptic writer was a writer exhorting to hope by giving a larger view of history in the perspective of a brighter future. In the dark times in which he lived he usually despaired of the present age and looked forward to a new heaven and a new earth in the age to come. He saw the great prophecies unfulfilled and God's righteous people still humiliated in bondage to the idolatrous heathen. He points forward to the messianic age when the righteous nation shall possess the earth in an eternal messianic Kingdom, or else in a temporary triumph here and eternal blessedness hereafter. He sees history divinely determined as a series of dramatic catastrophes, looking forward to a final cataclysm when Israel's tyrannical conquerors shall be trodden under foot.

As the bulk of this literature was produced after the closed canon of the Old Testament, under "the tyranny of the Law" which would admit of no contemporary prophet speaking new truth to his own age, and would acknowledge no inspiration in the present, each author had to write under the pseudonym of some great name in the past, such as Daniel, Noah, Enoch, Moses or the patriarchs.

The best of this literature was intensely monotheistic with a high code of ethics, often in advance of most of the Old Testament. It emphasizes the importance of the individual, the sacredness of personality, the inclusion of the Gentiles in the divine plan of salvation, the transcendental character of the Messiah and the hope of the future life, including both the Hebrew conception of the resurrection of the body and the Greek idea of the immortality of the soul. It was strong in the hope of the Kingdom of God on earth, and of the rule of righteousness as the ultimate triumph of God in history.

On the other hand the apocalyptic writings were often ex-

clusive, bigoted and vindictive, demanding vengeance upon their enemies. They frequently gave rein to the undisciplined imagination, and they ended in an illusion with regard to the final catastrophe. Yet we must appreciate both the intellectual and the spiritual value which they possessed and the important part they played in the thought life of Jesus and in the development of the New Testament.

The apocalyptic literature had many sources, not only Jewish but Babylonian, Persian and Greek. Persian dualism, representing the struggle of good and evil, light and darkness, God and Satan, the world of evil and the age to come, here finds larger expression, though it appears also in other books of the Old and New Testaments.

While the apocalyptic element occurs in many of the later writings of the Old Testament, in parts of Isaiah, Ezekiel, Joel, Zechariah and Daniel, most of it is found in the extra-canonical books.² The works that most concern us are Daniel, the "Little Apocalypse" in Mark 13, II Thessalonians 2, and the Revelation.

The Book of Daniel is typical of this literature. Modern scholars are agreed that it was written about 165 B.C., near the close of the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, who reigned 175-164 B.C. This king endeavored forcibly to Hellenize the Jews. He looted the temple, slaughtered the faithful, razed the walls of Jerusalem, forbade Sabbath observance, stopped the sacrifices, erected an altar to Zeus in place of the altar of burnt offering and sacrificed swine upon it. Revolting against this horror, the priest Matthias with his five sons, under the greatest of them, Judas Maccabeus, led an insurrection, recaptured Jerusalem, freed the people and finally set up an independent Jewish state again. In the darkest hour before this revolt at the end of 165 B.C. the writer of Daniel³ prophesies against the "little one," Antiochus, and expects the end of the age by the intervention of God during 164 B.C. (Daniel 7:14; 9:25-27). When the advent of the Kingdom did not take place as prophesied, a reviser, or the author in a later edition, postponed this date in an appendix (12:11) which extended the 1,150

days to 1,290.⁴ Then another edition extended the original 1,150 days to 1,335. The book prophesies the setting up of a messianic kingdom on earth. After the four empires of the beasts (the Babylonian, Median, Persian and Macedonian reigns) comes the Greek ruler of Syria, Antiochus Epiphanes ("the little horn") as the Antichrist warring against the saints (Daniel 7:1-14). Then God himself will intervene and set up the Kingdom when the pre-eminently righteous will rise in a somewhat mechanically conceived resurrection. One like a son of man comes on the clouds of heaven and sets up a universal and everlasting Kingdom on earth. A "son of man" at that time symbolized Israel, as distinguished from the world empires represented by beasts, and had no messianic significance in the mind of the writer of Daniel. No personal Messiah was intended in these writings. But later the writer of the Parables of Enoch interpreted this passage in Daniel as referring to an individual superhuman Messiah. Only after the first century B.C. was Daniel messianically interpreted. A century later in Galilee, however, all the people were in expectation of such a Messiah and for the promised deliverance of such a Kingdom, when John the Baptist called for national repentance to prepare for the Coming One.

If we turn to the "Little Apocalypse," as many scholars regard it, in Mark 13 (cf. Matt. 24, Luke 21), we find the words, "Let him that *readeth* understand" (Matt. 13:14), which probably indicate that the prediction first appeared not as a spoken word, as Jesus would have uttered it, but in written form, which was characteristic of all apocalypses. In Mark 13:30 it is declared that this generation shall not pass away until all these things were fulfilled, whereas Christ himself undoubtedly said: "Of that day or of that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but only the Father." In the opinion of many scholars certain passages like Mark 13:7, 8, 14-20, 24-27, 30, 31 should be removed from the text as constituting a Christian adaptation of an earlier Jewish work which had been written about A.D. 67-68 during the troubles preceding

the fall of Jerusalem, and used by Mark or a later editor of his work as an addition to the probably simpler and saner words of Jesus.

In II Thessalonians the apostle Paul uses the eschatology which he has inherited from the Jewish apocalyptic tradition. The end of the world is to be brought about when evil reaches its climax. The growth of evil culminates in the coming of the Antichrist (II Thes. 2:9), as the satanic counterfeit of the final advent of the true Messiah, when Christ descends from heaven and destroys the Antichrist. In place of an imminent second coming, the church finally turned, after hope long deferred, to the more rational interpretation of the last things found in the Fourth Gospel.

The Book of Revelation is the final apocalyptic writing in the New Testament, dating from about A.D. 96 during the persecution of Domitian. The author, writing with a widely different vocabulary and from a circle of ideas far removed from those of the Fourth Gospel, draws upon Jewish apocalyptic sources, which are often quite out of harmony with the teaching and spirit of Jesus. While the church is threatened with the pagan cult of Caesar-worship, when some had already suffered martyrdom, one who called himself John (which was a very common name at the time, though we have also Christian apocalypses named after Peter, Paul, Thomas, Stephen, etc.) was banished to the island of Patmos. He thus writes to his fellow Christians on the mainland near Ephesus his message of comfort in tribulation: God reigns, righteousness will yet triumph, evil will be destroyed and God's Kingdom will come.⁵ The book is strong in faith, strong in hope, but not in love, for God's love is never mentioned. It was of great comfort during the period of persecution, but after this passed there was widespread distaste for it in the early church.

THE APOCALYPTIC INFLUENCE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

In our quest of the historic sources and the nature of Christianity, we are here chiefly concerned with the influence of

apocalyptic ideas upon the mind of Jesus and the expectations of the early church. In many passages of the New Testament the phrase "Kingdom of God" means his kingly rule, but in others it is used eschatologically to signify the divine community in which the will of God will be perfectly realized. In the predictions of Isaiah there was to be a gradual spiritual transformation of man, but according to Daniel and Enoch the Kingdom was to be catastrophically introduced by God himself. During the two centuries before Christ the prevailing conception was that the Messiah was to come not from the tribe of Judah, of the line of David, but from the priestly tribe of Levi.

In the first century before Christ the hope of an eternal Kingdom on the present earth was abandoned. The partial realization of God's rule on earth was to be temporary; then there must be a final judgment and a resurrection of the righteous dead. The author of the Parables of Enoch, writing before 64 B.C., sees a new heaven and a new earth in which are the many mansions of the righteous, thus uniting a future hope for both Jewish national and personal immortality. He designates the personal Messiah as the Son of Man. In the growing dualism of this period, as God is removed further from man the gulf is bridged by such a Son of Man, a personal being whose origin is super-human.

We observe a wide diversity in the conceptions of the Kingdom of God and of the Messiah in the Old Testament. In the pre-prophetic period there was merely to be a future of national blessedness and material prosperity for the chosen people. In the prophets before the Exile the prevailing conception of the Kingdom of God was of a permanent rule on this earth, over which either God himself or the Messiah as his anointed was to reign. After the exile to Babylon and the destruction of the temple, the individual came into direct relation to God with the development of personal religion, especially in Jeremiah. In a sense the Kingdom of God was now to be within man among righteous individuals who had God's law written on their

hearts as a preparation for the messianic consummation, which was to be world-wide for Jews and Gentiles. Isaiah (chapters 45-46) sees a transformed heaven and earth as the scene of the Kingdom, and this transformation was apparently to take place gradually. In later apocalyptic teaching, the Kingdom can attain its consummation not on sinful earth but only in the world to come, after the resurrection of the righteous.

We find several of these views of the Kingdom reappearing in the synoptic report of the teaching of Christ. The Kingdom of God is not to come by observation but is already among men or within them. It is to be taken away from the Jews and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof, where many shall come from the east and west. The field is the whole world. Only the righteous and the repentant shall enter the Kingdom when it comes with power.

The prophetic nation is portrayed in the Second Isaiah, but the Jews saw no messianic significance in this Suffering Servant.⁶ The idea of a crucified Messiah was inconceivable to them. As we have seen the writer of I Enoch (chapters 37-71) developed the germ of the conception found in Daniel in the idea of a personal, supernatural Son of Man. He was now conceived as pre-existent from the beginning, he was to possess universal dominion, he was to have all judgment committed to him and he was now called for the first time in literature the Christ, the Righteous One, the Elect One and the Son of Man in passages like the following from this remarkable Book of Enoch:

“And I saw one who was the Head of Days,
And with him was another being whose countenance had
the appearance of a man
And his face was full of graciousness like one of the holy
angels.
And he answered and said unto me
This is the Son of Man who hath righteousness,
And who revealeth all the treasures of that which is hidden:
Because the Lord of Spirits hath chosen him. . . .

On that day Mine Elect One shall sit on the throne of his glory,
And shall try their works
And their places of rest shall be innumerable. . . .
And he shall be a light to the Gentiles,
And the hope of those that are troubled of heart.
The Elect One standeth before the Lord of Spirits
And his glory is forever and ever,
And his might unto all generations. . . .
And he sat on the throne of his glory,
And all judgment was given unto the Son of Man,
And he caused sinners to pass away from off the face of the earth,
And those who have led the world astray.”⁷

Side by side with this expectation of a Son of Man there was in other writers the revival of the hope of a kingly Messiah sprung from David who is to be the avenger of his people's wrongs upon all the heathen nations, “that he may shatter unrighteous rulers, and that he may purge Jerusalem from nations that trample her down to destruction.” The ungodly nations are to be destroyed by the word of his mouth and the rest of the world is to become subject to him. The warlike character and successes of the Maccabean priest-kings had revived the hope of a Davidic Messiah of force and the Pharisaic party had become committed to political interests. The former messianic Prince of Peace was now to become a man of war. Many Jews thought they had found a fulfillment of the expected king, prophet and priest in the Maccabean John Hyrcanus.

Jesus turned from the idea of a warlike king and unites with Isaiah's conception of the Suffering Servant that of a Son of Man, where the Father was to be revealed in a Son who was to be the servant of all.⁸

It was from the apocalyptic side of Judaism that Christianity was born, and in Galilee, where these hopes rather than legalism were especially strong. Of the two forms of Pharisaism, the

apocalyptic led on to Christianity, while the legalistic was the forerunner of the Judaism of the Talmud. In Galilee in the second century B.C. the apocalyptic writings of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs reveal a deep religious life and a doctrine of man's forgiveness of his neighbor far in advance of most of the Old Testament.⁹

The influence of this Galilean book upon the New Testament is very extensive. The Sermon on the Mount in several instances reflects the spirit and sometimes the very phrases of this great work, as do other passages in the Gospels and the Pauline epistles.¹⁰ The Messiah is here expected to be first of all the ideal priest or mediator and then prophet and king. He is to be free from sin, to walk in meekness and righteousness, to establish a new priesthood under a new name, to be a mediator for the Gentiles, a prophet of the Most High, and king over all the nation. He is to open paradise to the righteous and to give the saints to eat of the tree of life, and sin is to come to an end. His Kingdom is to be on this earth and is to last forever.

The Messiah is thus pictured: "A man shall arise like the sun of righteousness, walking with the sons of men in meekness and righteousness; and no sin shall be found in him. And the heavens shall be opened unto him to pour out the spirit, the blessing of the Holy Father; and he shall pour out the spirit of grace upon you. . . . Then shall the scepter of my Kingdom shine forth, and from your root shall grow a rod of righteousness to the Gentiles to judge and save all that call upon the Lord" (*Judah 24:1-6*).

Professor Toy says of the Son of Man in Enoch: "A splendid being of heavenly origin stands by the side of God, and is by him invested with supreme authority in the world. He was chosen before the foundation of the world, has existed from the beginning, but is to be revealed to men only when the time of consummation shall arrive when he will intervene to judge the world, to punish the wicked, and to establish the righteous in perfect, never ending felicity. . . . With this description the portraiture of the Son of Man in the Gospels literally agrees.

He sits at the right hand of power and at the decisive moment comes in clouds of glory. Such passages in the New Testament testify to the fact that in the generation following the death of Jesus he was identified with the Enoch figure, the Enoch eschatology was attached to his person, and utterances in accordance with this conception were put in his mouth. At the same time he was identified with the Old Testament Messiah.”¹¹

Of all the apocalyptic literature the Book of Enoch has most influenced the New Testament. Almost all the New Testament writers are familiar with Enoch and are more or less influenced by its thought and diction. It is quoted directly in Jude 14, 15. The following are among a hundred odd passages which appear as quotations from or reminiscences of the Book of Enoch in the New Testament:

PARALLELS BETWEEN ENOCH AND THE NEW TESTAMENT

The following quotations are from the Book of Enoch:

“When they see the Son of Man sitting on the throne of his glory.” (Matt. 19:28. En. 62:5.)

“I will seat each on the throne of his honor.” (Matt. 18:28. En. 108:12.)

“Those who inherit eternal life.” (Matt. 19:29.)

“It had been good for them if they had not been born.” (Matt. 26:26. En. 38:2.)

“The Son of Man who rules over all.” (Matt. 28:18. En. 62:6.)

Gehenna first appears as hell. (Matt. 5:22, 29, 30; 10:28. En. 27:2.)

“He will put down the kings from their thrones.” (Luke 1:52. En. 46:5.)

“The Elect One” (i.e., the Messiah). (Luke 9:35; 23:35. En. 40:5.)

“The mammon of unrighteousness.” (Luke 16:9. En. 63:10.)

“The prayer of the righteous.” (Luke 18:7. En. 67:1, 2.)

"The day of their redemption has drawn nigh." (Luke 21:28. En. 51:2.)

The temple is "the house of the Lord." (John 2:16. En. 89:54.)

"Judgment was committed unto him, the Son of Man." (John 5:22, 27. En. 69:27.)

"The generation of light." (John 12:36. Eph. 5:8. En. 108:11.)

"Mansions of the righteous." (John 14:2. En. 39:4, 7.)

"The Righteous One" (the Messiah). (Acts 3:14; 7:52; 22:14. En. 38:2.)

Saved in his (the Messiah's) name. (Acts 4:12. II Cor. 6:11. En. 48:7.)

"Your prayers as a memorial before the Most High." (Acts 10:4. En. 99:3.)

"He will appoint a judge and judge them all before him." (Acts 17:31. En. 41:9.)

"Angels of power and principalities." (Rom. 8:38. En. 61:10.)

"The light of the Lord is seen in the face of the holy." (II Cor. 4:6. En. 38:4.)

"He who is blessed forever." (II Cor. 11:31. En. 77:1.)

"This world of unrighteousness." (Gal. 1:4. En. 48:7.)

"According to his good pleasure." (Eph. 1:9. En. 49:4.)

"Will fall down and bow the knee before him" (the Messiah). (Phil. 2:10. En. 48:5.)

"The Son of Man . . . all the treasures of that which is hidden." (Col. 2:3. En. 46:3.)

"Then shall pain come upon them as on a woman in travail." (I Thess. 5:3. En. 42:4.)

"Worthy of acceptation." (I Tim. 1:15. En. 94:1.)

"Lord of Lords, King of Kings." (I Tim. 6:15. En. 9:4.)

"Enoch the seventh from Adam prophesied: 'Lo he comes with ten thousand of his holy ones to execute judgment upon all and he will destroy the ungodly and will convict all flesh.'" (Jude 13-15. En. 40:8; 1:9; 5:4; 27:2.)

"A new heaven and a new earth." (II Pet. 3:13. En. 45:4.)

"The elect in the messianic Kingdom shall eat of the tree of life." (Rev. 2:7. En. 25:4.)

"I will seat each on the throne with honor." (Rev. 3:21. En. 108:12.)

"The horses will walk up to the breast in the blood of sinners." (Rev. 14:20. En. 100:3.)

"The books were opened." (Rev. 20:12. En. 90:20.)

"Cast into the fiery abyss." (Rev. 16:13-15. En. 90:26.)

In Revelation there is a new heaven and a new earth, a new Jerusalem coming down from heaven, yet all classes of sinners are without the gates of the city. These divergent conceptions are found also in Enoch. (Rev. 31:1; 22:14. En. 45:4, 5; 90:29.)¹²

These sayings are only the outward form of a message rich in high ethical precepts flowing from a deep spiritual life which was the natural heir of prophetic religion. As we read the Book of Enoch or the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs it is evident that we are very near to the time of Jesus and to his circle of ideas — far closer, for instance, than in the Book of Malachi. We find in Jesus' time the same deep religious life that is reflected in the Galilean Testaments of the Patriarchs. The idea of the forgiveness of enemies, which is in advance of the Old Testament, he carries on to its logical conclusion.

The conceptions of the Messiah and of the Kingdom of God in these later apocalyptic writings are also much closer to Jesus. Dr. R. H. Charles points out that apocalyptic religion flourished mainly in Galilee and that the Book of the Twelve Patriarchs, written about 109-106 B.C., had its home in Galilee. It was never accepted officially by the more legalistic Pharisees but only by certain mystics among them, but it found a congenial home in the early Christian church. And here in apocalyptic Galilee Jesus received his training and derived his views. This was the atmosphere that he breathed. When John the Baptist appeared to call the nation to a baptism of repentance to prepare

for the Coming One, "the people were in expectation and all men reasoned in their hearts concerning John whether haply he were the Christ." Their language concerning a personal Messiah is that of this apocalyptic literature rather than that of the earlier prophets.

Jesus himself boldly reinterpreted the prophetic, the legal and the apocalyptic teaching. He deliberately broke the law of the Sabbath and abolished the legal distinction between clean and unclean meats. He criticized and reinterpreted the Law of Moses in the Sermon on the Mount, and says he has come to fulfill its real spirit and purpose. As the later prophets reinterpreted the earlier ones, sometimes changing their dates and ideas, so Jesus more than any other freely reinterprets the past. Not the prophets, or Daniel, but the Book of Enoch is historically the source of the New Testament use of the term "Son of Man," and contributes much to its content. It is not surprising, therefore, if we find these apocalyptic and eschatological ideas of the coming of the Kingdom of God and the place of the Son of Man as the very central theme running through our earliest documents, Mark and the Sayings of Jesus. A similar historic situation gave birth to the apocalyptic element in the Old Testament, the New Testament and the Marxian dialectic of the nineteenth century. All these help to interpret one another.

NOTES

¹ The prophetic period from Amos to Malachi covered roughly the three centuries from 750 to 450 B.C.; the codification of the Law from 621 to 330 B.C. (not including the Jahvist and Elohist documents of Genesis which date from about 850 and 750 B.C. and the small Book of the Covenant). We are not here dealing with the later wisdom literature, Psalms, etc.

² The following are among the principal apocalyptic writings. In Palestine 200-1 B.C.: The Book of Noah, Enoch (which is in itself a library by various authors dating from 170 to 64 B.C.), the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, and the Psalms of Solomon. A.D. 1-100 and later: The Assumption of Moses, Apocalypse of Baruch, IV Ezra, Apoca-

lypse of Zephaniah, of Abraham, of Elijah, etc. Hellenistic works: II Enoch, Testaments of Job and of the Three Patriarchs, Sibylline Oracles, etc. There is also a large mass of Christian apocalyptic literature in the first century A.D.

³ He takes the pseudonym from Ezek. 14:14; 28:3.

⁴ See R. H. Charles, *Commentary on Daniel*, 1929, p. lxx; and Bewer's *Literature of the Old Testament*. The book was introduced only after the close of the Jewish canon among the Hagiographa, as it was unknown when the canon was closed. The writer is full of inaccuracies regarding the time from Nebuchadnezzar to Cyrus in the sixth century B.C. but most accurate on his own period of the second century B.C.

⁵ The events were to take place, however, in that generation, they "must *shortly* come to pass." "Behold I come quickly." Rome as Babylon was soon to be destroyed in "the fierceness of his wrath." The writer would have been surprised if he could have foreseen that Rome would become the chief center of the Christian church and that God's cause would triumph not through a miracle of violence but through long ages of discipline and moral suasion.

⁶ The Messiah is not mentioned in Amos, Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Joel, Daniel, or in much of Isaiah. Save in the Parables of Enoch, the prerogatives of forgiveness, judgment and lordship over death are always reserved to God alone, even where the Messiah is mentioned.

⁷ Enoch 46:1-3; 48:2-4; 49:2; 69:27.

⁸ The title Son of Man is used in the gospels only by Jesus in speaking of himself, and its use must have been an enigma to the disciples. The Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head, yet he can release men from their sins. He is despised, rejected and put to death, yet he is to be the judge of all mankind. Throughout this section we are indebted to the studies of Dr. R. H. Charles in his *Between the Old and New Testaments*, his *Book of Enoch*, *Commentary on Daniel*, etc.

⁹ The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs was written in Hebrew a century before Christ, after the final victory of the Maccabean John Hyrcanus over the Syrian power, by an earnest Pharisee who sees in this earthly prophet, priest and king the actual Messiah. The best of the Maccabees were at once high priests, civil rulers and military commanders. The entire book of the Twelve Patriarchs proclaims that God created man in his own image, that the law was given to enlighten every man, that salvation was for all mankind through conversion to Judaism, and that a man should love both God and his neighbor. Thus: "Love ye one another from the heart; and if a man sin against thee, cast forth the poison of hate and speak peaceably to him, and if he confess and repent, forgive him. But if he deny it do not get into a passion with him. For he who denieth may repent so as not again to wrong thee; yea, he may also honor and be at peace with thee. But

if he be shameless and persist in wrongdoing, even so forgive him from the heart, and leave to God the avenging." (From the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, Gad 6:3.) Cf. Luke 17:3; Matt. 18:15, 35.

¹⁰ Among others the following passages in the New Testament show the influence of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: Matt. 5:19, 28, 42; 6:16, 22, 23; 7:2; 12:35, 45; 18:15, 35; 19:28; 22:15, 37-39; 25:33-36, etc., together with similar passages in Mark, Luke, Acts and the Pauline epistles.

¹¹ Quoted by C. G. Montefiore in *The Synoptic Gospels*, I, 68.

¹² From R. H. Charles' commentary, *The Book of Enoch*, pp. 41-49.

IV

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

THE THOUGHT of the Kingdom of God formed the center of Jesus' life and teaching. It possessed him. In it he lived and moved and had his being. He staked everything upon it, his life, his death, his hope for the future of Israel and humanity. The term "Kingdom of God" is not found in the Old Testament, though the thought of God as King is everywhere present. The Kingdom of God is one of the largest concepts in human thought. It is vast, various, multiform. It is many-sided like a faceted diamond.

To Jesus and his followers it was an inspiring hope, a mighty incentive to action in the service of God and man, that energized them to attempt the impossible. It was the completion of the divine purpose, the fulfillment of the promises to Israel and of the hopes and needs of man. It was a criterion of all values and determined much of Jesus' ethical teaching. It combined all higher spiritual reality and was the source of many of his ideals. It was the one thing needful, for it was everything. It was a higher spiritual order; it was a moral order; and though it was wholly from God it was a social order that would be realized on earth.

We think of the evolution of a new social order from below like the slow building of a coral island in the sea.¹ To Jesus it was a Kingdom coming from above which it was the Father's good pleasure to give to his children. We think of a spiritual

reign in the hearts of men; the Jew thought of a messianic era, of a new age wherein God was to assert his sovereignty.

Though the Kingdom is multiform it is to Jesus chiefly two-sided. It is a Kingdom of God, yet it is for man; it may be a personal possession, yet it is primarily social. It is entered by individuals, yet its goal is a new society. Its consummation is in the future, yet it is a present reality. It is both a rule of God in the hearts of men and a realm of God, a new age or a divine society to be realized here or hereafter.

Before writing on this theme of the Kingdom of God the writer read rapidly through a harmony of the Gospels from the synoptic records. He found the material divided into a hundred and fifty-one sections.² When the phrases "the Kingdom of God," the "Christ," the "Son of God" and the "Son of Man" were marked it was found that sixty-seven sections of the harmony (or about 45 per cent) dealt with this central theme of the coming of the Kingdom through the Messiah; while nineteen other sections (making a total of 12 per cent) are about this subject of the Kingdom, its coming in blessing or judgment, and its agent the Messiah, without using these exact words.

This left sixty-five sections (or 43 per cent of the material) about other events or teaching connected with the life of Jesus which are not messianic, though they are all indirectly related to the rule or realm of God. It was quite evident, however, that the one central theme of the first three Gospels, in the thought of both Jesus and the early church, was the Kingdom of God.

Jesus' first message is: "The time has now come, God's reign is near; repent!" It is the Kingdom of God that gives significance to the choosing and message of the twelve, to the Sermon on the Mount, the early parables, the supreme question at Caesarea Philippi of the mission of the Son of Man, the ten closing eschatological parables, the entry to Jerusalem, the cleansing of the temple, the discourse on the last things, the final Passover meal, and the trial and crucifixion. Ultimately there are thus but one theme and one issue in the Synoptic Gospels.

THE PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM

The message of Jesus regarding the Kingdom of God was often given in the form of parables which are the most characteristic element of his teaching, though it was a form used also by the rabbis of his day. Had Jesus as a Galilean carpenter boldly stood forth and said that there would be no such rule of God as they expected and no conquering King in the Davidic line to destroy his enemies and make all nations subject to an exalted Israel, he would have been instantly put to death. The people were in a state of feverish expectation and their crudest and cruelest dreams of the future could find support in some passages from the prophetic or apocalyptic writers.

From Jesus' own inner experience, from his study of the Scriptures and the signs of the times as he saw them, Jesus derived his own views of the Kingdom, views radically different from those of the Pharisees, the Zealots, the priests and the masses. But he was compelled to use the expectations of the people, to build upon such faith and hope as they had, and to pour his own richer content into the old and inadequate molds of thought. As Dr. C. H. Dodd in his excellent *Parables of the Kingdom* shows, the parables of Jesus were vivid pictures, drawn from nature and human life about him, based on the conviction of the inward affinity between the natural and the spiritual order. It was to him transparently true that the Kingdom of God was "like" the divineness of the natural order and the daily life of man. Each parable usually presents a single point of comparison for the one great lesson it was intended to teach to his hearers. Naturally, as circumstances changed and the advent of the new age did not take place, we find Jesus' followers of a later generation, when the Gospels were written, drawing from them lessons very different from those intended for his earlier hearers.

In the Old Testament the Kingdom is spoken of prevailingly in two ways. God is King over Israel and already rules in so far as men obey him. But his realm must yet be realized over

all the world if he is to reign in the lives of men and in human society. Thus in Daniel "the saints of the Most High are to take the Kingdom," which involves making an end of "the kingdom of the enemy" or the evil in the world. Pious Jews of the first century prayed, as they still pray, in the Jewish *Authorized Daily Prayer Book*:³ "May he establish his Kingdom during your life and during your days, and during the life of all the house of Israel." This is a hope of the future as the central and absorbing petition of the Lord's Prayer: "Thy Kingdom come."

In the parables of Jesus the Kingdom is both a present fact and a future consummation. In one sense, expressed in many parables, the rule of God has come already in him. Jesus is himself the dividing line between two ages or dispensations. The Law and the prophets were until John. But the coming of Jesus marks the crisis of a new era: "The time has reached fulfillment, and the rule of God has drawn near. Repent and believe this good news." The Kingdom was conceived as both socially near in point of time and also within reach of individuals then and there. Jesus has come to cast fire on earth, a figure which well describes "the volcanic energy of the meteoric career depicted in the Gospels." It is related to the tremendous crisis which his appearance brought about. In him the Kingdom was present in all its momentous consequences and by their attitude to him men would judge themselves wise or foolish. Something new had taken place on earth once for all. It was at once blessing and judgment.

The long awaited hope of the weary centuries had at last arrived. The poor, the repentant, the childlike might enter the Kingdom now and God could rule in their hearts as in that of their Lord and Master. The Pharisees, the legalists, the proud would neither enter themselves nor permit others to do so. But Jesus called men to make the supreme decision once for all and individually to enter the narrow gateway. Jesus answers the Baptist's question whether he is indeed the Coming One by the evidences of "the powers of the world to come" already at

work as "realized eschatology": "The blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them." "If I by the finger of God cast out demons, then the Kingdom of God has already come upon you." In him it is in part already a present spiritual fact. "The Kingdom of God does not so come that the time of its coming can be calculated; none can say, Look here, or Look there, for see, the Kingdom of God is [suddenly] in your midst."

Jesus is here contrasting two types of the advent of the Messiah — the mechanistic, deterministic notions of an apocalyptic of "seventy weeks of years," and another type. In the latter, the Kingdom comes suddenly, quietly, unheralded, like a snowfall, or with the invasive suddenness of lightning. Everything in the early New Testament records suggests that the Kingdom's coming is (1) unknown to our calculation, for "no man knoweth the hour," and, (2) sudden, as the bridegroom at midnight, "let your loins be girded." After Caesarea Philippi the Kingdom is "near," "at hand." Thus in the time of Jesus the Kingdom was both imminent and in part already present as realized eschatology. But it was not, before the expected great consummation, fully realized. In that sense it never has come. Perhaps that is the meaning of the crucifixion on man's side as history's tragedy.

The Kingdom is the gift of God, the rule of God, it must come from above. It tears men up by the roots and separates them from the world. Jesus repudiates the morbid imagination of the apocalyptic writers as to the nature of their pictured world drama. He does not describe earth, heaven and hell as does the lurid writer of Revelation. Whatever later writers may have added to Jesus' own words, he himself described no sensuous paradise nor tortures in hell. He has nothing to say of any triumph of a Davidic dynasty and of vengeance upon Israel's enemies. Rather he bids men love even the Roman oppressors.

For Jesus, it is in the near future that the realm of God is to

be taken away from the disobedient people and given to those who will bear its fruit. He portrays no gradually realized final perfection of human society on earth and no "eschatology of bliss" here or hereafter. Where men "neither marry nor are given in marriage" is neither on a perfect earth nor in a sensuous heaven.

A number of Jesus' illustrations might be called parables of crisis. They are intended to teach neither the slow growth of God's rule in the centuries of future history, nor a catastrophic event in the distant future, but an immediate crisis confronting men with the necessity for decision. A number of these parables are grouped in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew, the fourth chapter of Mark and the eighth chapter of Luke. By the seaside Jesus tells the unforgettable parables of the sower, the earth bearing fruit of itself, the mustard seed, the leaven, and the tares. Here are five parables of growth. Modern liberalism has long interpreted these as implying the slow evolutionary growth of the rule of God following Jesus' time.

But Jesus had proclaimed God's realm as already present. The fierce opposition which had risen against him claimed that it was by the power of Beelzebub he was doing his undeniably mighty works. Discouragements were overwhelming, but Jesus' absolute faith in the Kingdom is unshaken. He says God's Kingdom has been like seed growing secretly. Now, in the time of Jesus, comes the harvest. God has long been preparing, through all the past, but over and over again Jesus tells the people that the harvest at last has come. They must pray for laborers and at once put in the sickle to reap.

In the parable of the sower there are indeed discouragements; every farmer meets them, but though there is inevitable waste and loss in some patches of the field, the abundant harvest is at hand. Some will be hardened, some shallow, some choked by thorns, but as surely as good ground bears fruit, spiritual men will respond.

So the mustard seed becomes a tree to shelter the birds. In Daniel a tree sheltering the birds is a symbol for a great empire

offering protection to its subject states (Dan. 4:12). Even so, with the coming of the Son of Man many of the blessings of the reign of God are now available for all men. The thought is similar to that of the great feast where all are welcome, including publicans and sinners whom Jesus invites and defends. In the parable of the leaven, long working secretly, the dough is now completely leavened. All things are now ready for the great consummation.

In the parables of the tares and of the dragnet Jesus faces the problem of evil. It must have pained and perplexed him, but his faith is absolute. He offers no philosophy of evil but confronts the realistic fact with his unshaken faith: "An enemy hath done this." Let both grow together. The tares will not destroy the wheat nor prevent the sure and abundant harvest.

It is the Father's good pleasure to *give* the Kingdom. It is freely offered but it costs everything. It may become an inward personal possession, a pearl of great price, a treasure hid, but it costs a man "all that he hath."

Most of the parables probably had a simple, primary application to the situation in Jesus' own time. We must have regard to "source criticism" and study each parable in the setting of its time. When the circumstances radically altered, the church began to attach new meanings to Jesus' pregnant words and drew from them lessons for a later day. Thus between A.D. 80 and 90, when Matthew and Luke were written, there was the perplexing problem of the long delayed second advent of the Son of Man. In many of these later parables it is the church of this later period and not the Galilean Jesus that is speaking, applying the lessons to the expected crisis in the future.

Thus the Judaism of Jesus' day was as salt that was tasteless and "good for nothing," but the later evangelists now apply this as a warning to Christian believers. Many of the parables, like the talents and pounds, were probably originally intended to warn against the timidity and caution of the religious leaders who would not take risks, see the crisis and yield everything to God. Pharisaism was hiding its entrusted treasure in a nap-

kin. As Dr. Klausner of Jerusalem says, "the Judaism of that time had no other aim than to save the tiny nation, the guardian of great ideals, from sinking into the broad sea of heathen culture."⁴

The later writers apply these parables of the pounds and talents to teach a lesson regarding the delay of the second advent, because some "supposed that the Kingdom of God would *immediately appear*"; so the parables of the faithful and unfaithful servants, the thief at night and the ten virgins were made to apply to the delayed coming of the Son of Man. Such passages multiply toward the end of the narrative. When Peter made his great confession Jesus undoubtedly said something about building upon such faith and that the gates of hell should not prevail against God's eternal spiritual Kingdom. But the passage (Matt. 16:17-19) as it now reads from some later hand might almost have been written by one of the popes of an infallible Roman Church. The explanation of the delayed coming by the demand that the gospel first be preached in all the world was also added by a later hand, as well as the closing words of Matthew's Gospel with their late trinitarian formula.

But not all the later additions and interpretations were a loss. Many of them offered just the help that was needed in the new circumstances. The coming of Jesus was creative. It begat a new life everywhere — spiritual, moral, intellectual and social. The creative life he lived and the nucleus of truth which he imparted quickened fresh thought and inspiration in his followers, as they expanded his teaching and applied it to new situations. Perhaps the most beautiful and helpful illustration of this is found in passages like the scene of the last judgment, in the separation of the sheep and the goats. The language and ideas of the judgment scene are undoubtedly those of a later day, yet the teaching is in inner harmony with the spirit of Jesus himself.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD AS REVOLUTIONARY RELIGION

We have seen that in Jesus' time there was a passionate expectation of the coming of the realm of God. Everything was

at stake in this idea of the Kingdom — all prophecy, all apocalyptic hopes shining through the dark ages, the end and purpose of the Law, the concrete *summum bonum* of the Jews, embracing all known and unknown values, the destiny of the chosen people and of all humanity, the very idea of God himself. Jesus staked everything on this all-embracing reality. He proclaimed it as amazing good news. He lived in it, for God completely ruled in his heart. Much of the Sermon on the Mount was unconsciously autobiographical. To be merciful, to be perfect in love as his Father in heaven was perfect, in the Jewish sense of being complete and full-grown, was his daily experience.

Probably only a fraction of Jesus' teaching concerning the Kingdom of God has come down to us. What we have is that which made the deepest impression upon the disciples and appealed to them most at the time the Gospels were written. It is noteworthy that Jesus nowhere attempts to define the Kingdom. He tells us very little about it in detail. Wherever we touch what seems to be his original teaching, it is always sane. Jesus was compelled to work through the imperfect medium of prophetic and apocalyptic writers before him, the mistaken expectations of his contemporaries, and the limitations of Galilean fishermen or Jewish interpreters who reported him. None of these were infallible.

As Jesus from his unique experience interprets God as Father, so from his sense of God's rule in his own heart does he derive his higher conception of the Kingdom. Of a few central truths he seemed certain. He was sure of the destruction of Jerusalem, as the prophets before him were of coming captivity. He was equally sure of his death as in some way necessary to the realization of God's reign on earth. He was certain that in his own heart and in the midst of his people the rule of God was already present, giving a foretaste of the powers of the age to come. He seemed sure that the fuller realization of those powers of the new era was to be experienced in that generation by many who heard him speak. He was sure of the final harvest, of the consummation of the rule and realm of God in some way on earth and in the life to come. He was certain also that the

morbid apocalyptic forecasts of heaven, of hell and of lurid judgment were unhealthy and abhorrent. Men should not be running here and there, nor calculating the times and seasons by mystic, esoteric symbols.

Jesus cut away many of the rank growths of tradition and superstition with which the idea of the Kingdom had been entangled and left us a simple, noble conception. He realized the impossibility of Israel as a nation becoming the Suffering Servant of Isaiah's prophecy. Even the remnant and his chosen twelve finally failed him. He had to go on alone to become the one who could fulfill all the promises of the past, especially the three messianic elements of the prophetic, the apocalyptic and the sacrificial. In him alone were they realized and through him the Kingdom comes. The Messiah had been a dim, imaginary and illusory figure pictured in many contradictory ways. Jesus at last was real. He bequeaths to us himself and the glorious ideal and reality of the Kingdom of God.

We must not miss what the author of Hebrews calls "the chief point" of all this. If, as we believe, Jesus was eternally right, then the Kingdom of God, in our own lives and in society, including all the vital social, moral and spiritual issues of our own day, must become the one consuming quest of our lives. Jesus himself is here the touchstone. Either he was a misguided fanatic and a mistaken apocalyptic peasant consumed by the dreams of his day, or he was Lord and Master of an eternal spiritual realm. Here is the supreme crisis, the final either-or that Jesus proclaimed to the men of his own time when he said that the Kingdom of God was then — as it is now — at hand. If God be God we must follow him. This was the challenge of the first of the prophets, Elijah, as it was of the last great Prophet when he said, "Follow me." Jesus himself is the Way.

We shall find many elements of truth, goodness and beauty in some of the modern patterns for a new social spiritual order. And whatever is true in these we should appropriate. Jesus' concept of the Kingdom is a broad and all-embracing framework. God is its center and the utmost human well-being is

its ever widening circumference. The sorry world in which we live supremely needs two things — spiritualization and socialization. No amount of professional religion will avail if masses of men are complacently left in poverty, injustice and misery. Jesus himself was compassionate to sin but blazed with indignation against false religion. There can be no adequate spiritualization without socialization, or complete sharing in the material sphere. To spiritualize and socialize all human life will drive us into every phase of the world's life, economic, political and social.

Mr. H. G. Wells says that from the day this Kingdom was preached the world began to be different. He writes: "This doctrine of the Kingdom of God, which was the main teaching of Jesus, and which plays so small a part in the Christian creeds, is certainly one of the most revolutionary doctrines that ever stirred and changed human thought. It is small wonder if the world of that time failed to grasp its full significance, and recoiled in dismay from even a half-apprehension of its tremendous challenges to the established habits and institutions of mankind. . . . For the doctrine of the Kingdom as Jesus seems to have preached it, was no less than a bold and uncompromising demand for a complete change and cleansing of the life of our struggling race, an utter cleansing, without and within.

"It was not merely *a moral and social revolution* that Jesus proclaimed; it is clear from a score of indications that his teaching had a political bent of the plainest sort. It is true that he said his Kingdom was not of this world, that it was in the hearts of men and not upon a throne; but it is equally clear that wherever and in what measure his Kingdom was set up in the hearts of men, *the outer world would be in that measure revolutionized and made new*. . . .

"In the white blaze of this Kingdom of his there was to be no property, no privilege, no pride and precedence; no motive indeed and no reward but love. Is it any wonder that the priests realized that between this man and themselves there was no choice but that he or priestcraft should perish? . . . To take

him seriously was to enter upon a strange and alarming life, to abandon habits, to control instincts and impulses, to essay an incredible happiness. . . .

"Is it any wonder that to this day this Galilean is too much for our small hearts?"⁵

If the Kingdom of God remains for us as the eternal spiritual reality, three aspects of it especially will be vital today.

First the personal aspect. Where the will of God is done there is the Kingdom. In the heart where God reigns the rule of God is forever a pearl of great price. But the rule of God is not primarily a personal possession. It can be realized socially only by the sacrifice of self. We must see the seed of the Kingdom growing all about us in all realms of life wherever the will of God is done. Our family, the circle of our nearest and dearest, like that of Jesus, will have to be widened to include all who do the will of God in religious, economic, political or social spheres.

Finally, the conception and reality of the Kingdom must appeal to us not only as inward personal experience and as motivation in service to seek to extend the rule of God in all the common life of man, but it must become the one and only future goal and end for which we live. For it is a Kingdom of ends, the realization of all values, the sum of all good, a social order that shall growingly approximate to Jesus' ideals. It must be our one end as truly as it was Christ's. We do not need to forecast events and we should take warning from the prophecies of the later writers of the New Testament, such as the Revelation, some of which are unfulfilled after nineteen centuries. We should forever cast off the profitless speculations of those who have run hither and thither after apocalyptic dreams for many centuries.

As one of thousands of such we may quote the following: "Our earth is degenerate in these latter days. There are signs that the world is speedily coming to an end. Children no longer obey their parents. The end of the world is evidently approaching." This is not a contemporary complaint. It is an

inscription on an Assyrian tablet now in the museum at Constantinople. Its approximate date is 2800 B.C., nearly five thousand years ago, long before Abraham was born. During all these centuries men have been saying that the end was at hand, that it was coming "speedily." The writer of the Book of Daniel foretold the immediate end in 165 B.C.; the author of Revelation repeated it in A.D. 96; and some have been saying the same ever since. This lesson at least we should have learned from the mistakes of the past.

We need expect no perfection in any social order on this earth. Like the mathematical asymptote, "a line which continually approaches a given curve but does not meet it within a definite distance," our ideal of the rule and realm of God may seem ever to recede in the distant future. Our goal is not abstract perfection but the growing concrete rule of God in the real world. Nevertheless we must aim at the "impossible possibility" of this *summum bonum*. We must not prematurely identify the transcendent will of God with canonical moral codes, or with the symbols of religion, or with the institution of the church on earth. If we do, the result will be — Rome. Neither does the Kingdom of God mean merely the evolutionary ideal society of modern culture realized in democracy or in the League of Nations or in any other phase of institutional society. Utopianism will always lead to disillusionment.

The very heart of the apocalyptic hope was "an unveiling of the supernatural in the natural," the manifestation of God in the world. And nothing less than this must we seek. Jesus' expectation of the Kingdom embodied the ideal of perfect love, but "a religion which holds love to be the final law of life stultifies itself if it does not support equal justice as a political and economic approximation of the ideal of love." We must strive for and welcome every advance toward our ultimate goal in every sphere of the common life. Whatever makes for spiritualization and socialization, every fuller orientation of life toward God and man, every advance in righteousness or justice, should be our quest! All that leads to the greater integration of life,

to growing harmony, cooperation and unity in human well-being, all that adds to the wholeness and happiness of the common life, is presumably our ally. Whenever any part of the world advances in sound economics that imply wider prosperity for the underprivileged, clean politics, good government and socialized education for a more happily ordered society, it is an approach to our ideal.

Yet we must seek nothing less than the rule of God where love will be sovereign in all human relations. In his translation of the Gospels Professor Torrey renders "be ye perfect" in the Hebrew sense: "Be therefore all-including in your good will, as your heavenly Father includes all." The Kingdom of God should mean for us all that it meant to Jesus, a personal possession in inward experience, our daily task and our final goal. Thus must we seek the rule and realm of God.

THE APOCALYPTIC KINGDOM

There had been three principal conceptions of the messianic deliverer in the prophetic and apocalyptic hope. First, he was to be a warlike, conquering Son of David; second, he was to be the Son of Man who would bring in the Kingdom of God on the clouds of heaven; and third, he was to be the Suffering Servant, despised and rejected of men, on whom was to be laid the iniquity of us all.

Of these three contradictory prophecies, Jesus rejected the first from the time of his temptation in the wilderness to his death, but combined the second and the third in a unique and hitherto undreamed-of way. In a moral transcendentalism he is to be not only the Man from Heaven, but a Son of Man who *must* die as the vicarious Suffering Servant, utterly human yet the agent of the divine plan and the instrument of the divine victory.

Not only Jesus himself, but all before or since his day who envisage an ideal social or spiritual order, whether a Kingdom of God or a utopia of man, are ever between the two dangers of materialism and dualism. The first is the palpable peril of ac-

cepting as the ideal itself some approximation of the truth realized in history. The second is the danger of dualism or otherworldliness. Men despair of ever realizing their ideal in history and banish it beyond time to an ideal or future world, above or beyond the real world. The first is the danger of impatience or foreshortening, the second is the indefinite postponement or surrender of the ideal.

As an illustration of the first error: Many sympathizers accept the achievements of Soviet Russia today as the realization of the communist ideal. They believe in the judgments and values of the workers as though they were absolute or universal truth for all classes. They expect the realization of an absolute ideal here and now in the temporal order once the ownership of the means of production is socialized. A ruthless dictatorship must introduce such perfection that the necessity for any government whatever will cease, as it "withers away" in a material paradise.

Another illustration is found in the way in which Woodrow Wilson nobly conceived an ideal of peace achieved through a League of Nations, but was betrayed into accepting the Treaty of Versailles as an approximation of the realization of his ideal, instead of the sordid thing that in fact it was.

We find this foreshortening and oversimplification in those who think that one single panacea is needed to bring in their utopia. In the social sphere some seize upon the single tax, others upon social credit, or the cooperative movement, or socialism, or communism, or fascism, as the one and only thing needed to solve all the world's problems. Others pin their faith to the League of Nations, or to democracy, or to nonresistant pacifism. Many cling to their own particular brand of fundamentalism, of pure personal religion, or hold desperately to the belief that the time is near of a literal bodily second coming of Christ "in the air" or "on the clouds."

At one extreme, liberal Christianity conceives the Kingdom of God as only the ideal society which modern civilization hopes to realize through intelligence, education and the evolu-

tionary process. At the other extreme, multitudes lost the hope of ever realizing the ideal on this earth at all and postponed it to a future heaven. As Reinhold Niebuhr says, such dualistic religion, which was utterly foreign to Jesus, "finds escape in some rational or eternal absolute, in a realm of the supernatural which ceases to be the ground of the natural. . . . The religion of Jesus is prophetic religion in which the moral ideal of love and vicarious suffering, elaborated by the Second Isaiah, achieves such a purity that the possibility of its realization in history becomes remote. His Kingdom of God is always a possibility in history, because its heights of pure love are organically related to the experience of love in all human life, but it is also an impossibility in history and always beyond every historical achievement. . . . Only a vital Christian faith, renewing its youth in its prophetic origin, is capable of dealing adequately with the moral and social problems of our age. Such a faith alone can point to a source of meaning which transcends all the little universes of value and meaning which have their day and cease to be and yet not seek refuge in an eternal world where all history ceases to be significant."⁶

We shall find that since Jesus, as reported by the Synoptics, was truly human he, like every other historical figure and every prophet of the Old Testament, was apparently subject to this chronological illusion, this foreshortening or premature application of the truth to one's own time or to the immediate future. For illustration: Jeremiah had prophesied the destruction of Babylon and the return of Israel from captivity in the symbolic number of seventy years. As a matter of fact the prophecy was fulfilled some thirty years earlier than this.⁷ Later, the author of Daniel, writing in 165–164 B.C., prophesied the restoration of Jerusalem in the symbolic period of seven times seventy, or four hundred and ninety years. This was to complete the judgment upon the people, bring in the anointed, deliver and restore Jerusalem.⁸

Again, Isaiah gives a sign to King Ahaz that some now expectant mother will shortly bring forth a son, calling him Immanuel, or God with us, thus shaming the king's unbelief.

Within three years, before he is old enough to distinguish between wholesome and harmful food, their enemies Syria and Ephraim will be devastated.⁹ But neither this nor any other prophecy in the Bible or any other book that sets a definite date has ever been literally fulfilled.

There were things Jesus, as truly man, did not know, and said he did not know: "Now no one knows anything about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, not even the Son, but only the Father." He did not know whether he would find faith on earth at his coming again. As reported by the early New Testament writers he, with all his followers, believed that his visible second advent and the coming of the Kingdom of God in power would take place in that generation, in the lifetime of those standing before him.¹⁰

But though Jesus, as truly human, was subject to this almost universal chronological illusion, and was mistaken as to the details of the time and method of the fulfillment, he was eternally right on the great spiritual truths which he proclaimed. He was right about God and his relation to man and history. He was right about sin and God's judgment upon it. He was right, a thousand times right, about the Kingdom of God as his central message and the hope of its fulfillment on earth. The Kingdom or rule of God was indeed already present in him. It would never come by observation or excitement. His followers need not run here or there to some favored locality. As he himself did not know the day nor the hour, so his followers could never know the times and seasons. They were to seek only this all-embracing spiritual reality of God's reign on earth. On all of these spiritual essentials he was right. And these are the eternal truths which apply to our own day.

If we accept this realistic view we shall have a realistic reward. Our feet will be upon the solid ground of fact. We shall advance unafraid in the spirit of modern science. We shall find perhaps a key to the interpretation of history toward which Augustine was groping in his *City of God*.

We shall find in a later chapter that the four principal elements in Jesus' conception of the Kingdom of God are the four

basic needs and demands of every awakening individual man — justice, liberty, a more abundant life, and a widening fellowship which may become ideally a universal brotherhood. All four are realized through Jesus' dominant principle of love.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND HISTORY

*The Kingdom of God and History*¹¹ is the title of one of the six preliminary volumes of the Oxford Conference on Church, Community and State. Seven writers from various points of view discuss the relation of the Kingdom of God to history. Several of them believe that we are indeed living at the end of an age and that there are widespread evidences of the disintegration of our economic order and of the civilization based upon it.

Most of these writers find the goal of history in the Kingdom of God, a transcendent-immanent conception of the rule of God in history, which is also the realm of man's purposive but sinful activity. History has a direction determined by the eternal values of God's nature and by his active purpose. There are no concrete evils from which the love of God cannot redeem men, yet the Kingdom cannot be completely realized in history but implies an eternal life beyond the bounds of history.

This Kingdom is both present and future, both personal and social in its meaning, gathering men into a community whose bond is love. This community will itself be a dynamic realization of the Kingdom of God and should fulfill its prophetic function by becoming instrumental in transforming all social institutions till they become subject to the spirit of Christ. There is a cumulative realization of spiritual value and a progressive revelation of God in history. The church can fulfill its prophetic function as the Confessional Church is doing in Germany today. But just as it was only a small remnant that functioned in the great crises of Jewish history, so it may be only the revolutionary remnant of a prophetic church which will function in the present world crisis; the majority will be blind to the evils of the present economic order.

We are not always able to discern the working of a God who "hideth himself," but history is shot through with superhistory. It is a vast complex of good and evil, of the divine and human. Professor Paul Tillich discovers the working of impersonal "demonic"¹² forces in capitalism, nationalism and bolshevism. Our civilization is already breaking down in the disintegration of capitalism, even before the catastrophe of world war. Christians are always called to disobey and defy the state when its commands clash with loyalty to the Kingdom. Professor Tillich takes the standpoint of "religious socialism," believing that "the coming form of human society must be a socialist one." He maintains that Marxism has opened the eyes of Western society to the working of the laws of the class struggle which arises inevitably out of our industrial system, a struggle which will certainly cause destructive divisions within society and even within the church. He shows that the "vitally prophetic element in Marxism" unfortunately clothed itself in anti-religious materialistic forms owing to the failure of the church in the nineteenth century, which Marx vividly saw as pseudo-religion in Germany and Russia. Knowing nothing of revolutionary Christianity Marx concluded that all religion was anti-social and reactionary. Revolutionary Christians may express an antidemonic criticism of Marxism and realize a synthesis between Christianity and socialism in an imperative demand for justice amid disintegrating capitalism. They may make a synthesis between their own revolutionary religion and the modern science of economics.

The bipolar religious interpretation of history has two roots, a religious-transcendent root in the Kingdom of God, and a political-immanent one in the socialist interpretation of the present. From the Christian point of view Christ is the center of history. The spiritual beginning of history was in the first expectation of the Kingdom, its end is the realization of Christ's Kingdom. Thus we divide all history into two categories, before and after Christ.

The word "Kingdom" is used as a symbol taken from the

social and political sphere, and "the Kingdom of God" is a symbolic expression of the ultimate meaning of existence which is found in Christ as the center of history. Thus the Kingdom of God is a dynamic conception, not completed but always becoming, not present but always "at hand," under the living God, entering history, struggling in history, fulfilling history. Thus we see the meaning of both Christian missions and Christian social movements gathering the potential, divided church out of all religions and cultures toward the Kingdom of God as the goal of world history, where power will be found only in absolute unity with love.

NOTES

¹ See E. F. Scott, *The Kingdom of God*, pp. 60-70.

² The harmony used was H. B. Sharman's *Records of the Life of Jesus*. Substantially the same results will be found in any other harmony of the Synoptics.

³ Published by Eyre and Spottiswoode, London, 1908, authorized by the Chief Rabbi.

⁴ The quotation is from Professor Dodd's *The Parables of the Kingdom*, to which we are greatly indebted throughout this section.

⁵ H. G. Wells, *Outline of History*, pp. 592-99. Italics are ours. We have used throughout this book Jesus' own phrase, "the Kingdom of God," and not the later phrase of Matthew, "the Kingdom of Heaven."

⁶ *An Interpretation of Christian Ethics*, pp. 21, 31.

⁷ Jer. 25:11; 29:10.

⁸ The period from 587 B.C., the date of Jeremiah's prophecy, to 164 B.C., the close of the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, covers only 423 years, leaving 67 years unaccounted for. If we extend the period to the restoration under the Maccabees it is still too early. As in the case of Josephus and all other early writers, sacred or secular, the fulfillment is never exact.

⁹ Isa. 7:14-16. Matt. 1:23 sees the fulfillment in Christ, though the passage was never regarded by the Jews as messianic.

¹⁰ Mark 13:26-32; Matt. 24:30-34; Luke 17:29-32, etc.

¹¹ By H. G. Wood, C. H. Dodd, Edwyn Bevan, Eugene Lyman, Paul Tillich, H. D. Wendland and Christopher Dawson. American ed. published by Willett, Clark and Co., Chicago.

¹² Dr. Tillich sees history as a battlefield of the divine and demonic. The demonic was a category used in Persia and in Jewish and Christian

apocalyptic which moderns can also employ, though the belief in demonic beings has been destroyed. It denotes the destructive, blind and chaotic element as evidenced in the return to primitivism and paganism in certain fascist countries today, but is not confined to them, because "demonic powers can penetrate into the church itself."

v

THE MEANING OF CHRIST

IN OUR inquiry as to the nature of Christianity we are inevitably driven back to the study of Christ himself, his person and his work. Who was he? What was his relation to God and to man? What did he do for man?¹

When the apostle Paul attempts to define the gospel he finds as its foundation, "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures," and its summary in the simple statement, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." If we are to understand historic Christianity there are three terms to be examined: "God," "in Christ," "reconciling."

GOD CREATING

As our definition of original Christianity is theocentric, we must begin with God. Primitive Christianity did not seek to demonstrate or define God, but discovered him like the inescapable sun in the heavens.²

In the ever enlarging conception of God throughout the Old and the New Testaments we see God, creating, redeeming and ruling, as pointing possibly toward a final culmination in a conception of the threefold nature of God, formulated in the later doctrine of the Trinity. Juliana of Norwich holds a hazelnut in the palm of her hand and quaintly asks: "What might this be? . . . It is all that is made. In this little thing I saw three properties. God made it. God loveth it. God keepeth it. . . . All-thing hath being by the love of God."³ In this symbol this

simple woman sees the universe and the threefold activity of the Triune God: God in creation, God in redemption, and God ruling by his indwelling Spirit.

Christianity begins first of all with God creating. By our definition of this religion as a living organism we must include not only the naïve and noble picture of God's creation in Genesis, but the later revelation of truth in modern science. If it is true at all the account in Genesis is the core of essential truth regarding creation, that it is God's world and that it is made for a purpose of good.⁴ And yet this is surely a childlike picture of a world made as it were by magic in almost a moment of time, in six days of twenty-four hours each.

How much higher is the conception if we rise to the revelation of modern science. Here is not a magical making of something out of nothing, but an age-long agonizing process that takes in the whole majestic sweep of evolution. Over countless ages in the inorganic and organic spheres at last we see life mounting upward toward the costly creation of human personality in the spiritual image of God. We must remember, however, that evolution is never a substitute for creation. The God of evolution is still the Creator through the evolutionary process. Science can only trace causation in a series of events. The element of divine creation appears not only at the beginning but in all novelty as it emerges.

The writer remembers standing in awe before the skull of the newly discovered Peking man, estimated by the archaeologists to be approximately a million years old. Yet these aeons are only the last brief moment of a costly process extending over astronomical and biological stretches of time that are to man almost infinite. So we see not an opaque universe nor a heartless machine but, as a result of the primordial push and pull between protons, electrons and atoms, everywhere a living world of "organized energy working rationally toward the accomplishment of higher ends." In the core of our own being also we find a similar organizing activity. We cannot by the demonstration of reason prove either the existence of a world

external to ourselves, nor God as the source of that world, nor our own personalities. Only by faith — that is, by courageous and creative activity — are we able to integrate and unify our world within and our universe without as an orderly whole. If we ourselves are “organized energy working rationally toward the accomplishment of higher ends,” we may find that we are persons cooperating with the great Universe-Personality, sons in spiritual fellowship with a divine Father. And we may discover that the consummation of this continuous creation is in a society of such persons in a Kingdom of God.

The later revelation of modern science tends to show, not a dualistic dichotomy of a two-storied universe, but one majestic whole. We do not find a lower order of nature and a higher supernature, nor the Greek conception of an inferior world of unclean matter, into which the higher realm of the spirit must intrude by miracle. Rather we find one universe of nature everywhere interpenetrated by spirit, for spiritual ends. Nature is not a closed mechanism that must be broken into by miracle. Rather the whole universe of intelligence and purpose is a miracle of organized energy, in which God is everywhere immanent. Man, who lives on the material plane of law, may gradually achieve spiritual freedom in fellowship with God. God's rule, which rests on a basis of necessity in the material realm, is gradually extending in the sphere of human freedom to realize the Kingdom of God, which is the goal of God and man, of the individual and society.

Thus all nature, as the living garment of God, becomes symbolic and sacramental. We see God in the “little flower in the crannied wall” and in a hazelnut we find the universe. We see God everywhere. The very atmosphere, with its steady pressure of fifteen pounds to the square inch, becomes a symbol of the constant grace of God. So is the infinite and eternal energy which is displayed in the orderly bombardment of the electrons.

The high achievement of the ethical monotheism of the Hebrews was not reached at a bound, nor was it capable of disclosure by a sudden lightning flash of revelation. Beginning

amid pagan polytheism and polydemonism, the tribal god of early Israel was conceived, along with Baal and Moloch, as only one among many such. Amid travail and pain with Amos came the conception of God as righteous, and in the tragic experience of Hosea that of a God of love. The Moses of tradition, when for the second time the Law was delivered, declared, "The Lord thy God is one and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy mind and with all thy life." Isaiah advances to the thought that he is universal, the God of all, while Jeremiah in the agony of captivity finds him the God of the individual and of personal relations. The great unknown prophet of the Exile, in his own experience, finds the very heart of God in vicarious suffering, in the typical figure of the Servant of Jehovah who "hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, who was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, for the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

Just as we cannot conceive and visualize a new flower or animal, so our conception of God and of good cannot go beyond the elements of our experience. In the fullness of time, however, comes one who enlarges our whole conception of God, who creates new altitudes of goodness, who achieves a new type of manhood hitherto unimagined. Like a vast unscaled Himalayan peak, Jesus looms before us.

GOD REDEEMING

Jesus was a simple man, a Galilean carpenter, who lived such a life and died such a death that he adds majesty and power to humanity's hitherto highest conception of God. Although a man, tempted as we are, Jesus achieves such supreme goodness, such utter loyalty to truth, such an abandon of self-giving love, that human thought and imagination can reach no higher. He breaks the molds of our previous thought of God. Dr. Klausner, as a Hebrew, referring to Jesus' bidding men love their enemies, since their "Father in heaven makes his sun to rise on the evil and the good," holds that "Jesus introduces something

new into the idea of God.”⁵ It was Jesus himself that was new. He was the first to perceive the full implications of such fatherhood and to live a whole life in this unshaken belief. He lived in the assurance that he who created the heaven and earth cares for little children, loves his enemies, seeks every wayward son as a shepherd his lost sheep, and welcomes the prodigal home to the uttermost love of a father’s heart and to the full joy of sonship. Jesus was able to make this faith so creative and contagious that men in every age could share his experience and validate his faith in God as Father.

Jesus’ achievement of goodness by this faith is so unique that the highest we can conceive of God is that he is Christlike. This seems, indeed, for many too good to be true, too high to hope for. It would border upon the blasphemous to think of God as like Amos, Hosea, Moses, Isaiah or Jeremiah. But what is the implication for the person of Jesus if the highest we can think of God is that he is Christlike?

If this is a spiritual fact, it compels those who are his followers to revise and enlarge not only their conception of God but of the universe. If it is such a universe that it has produced such goodness as we find in Jesus, can it be less than utterly good at heart?

We can conceive of no crude fisherman of Galilee and of no pious fanaticism or fraud of later writers creating such an ideal of love that it sets the highest standards for the human race. Jesus thus becomes our relative absolute, our plumline of measurement. He is the keystone of the arch of human experience, the interpretative center of all history. It is a different world since he lived in it. Our frail humanity inherits from the long evolutionary heredity of “nature, red in tooth and claw,” “yet we find the spirit of Jesus so native to our spirit, that we criticize the Power behind nature from his point of view. . . . Jesus is the culmination of the whole process of evolutionary life, and the age-long struggle, with its concomitants of pain and death was an essential preliminary to his being.”⁶

If we trace the thought of God in creation, it brings us inevitably to that of God in redemption; "God was in Christ reconciling." For one who holds that there is a philosophy of history, it is perhaps not too difficult to believe that Jesus appeared at a psychological moment, on a tide in the affairs of men, a particular time and place in a long prepared world. Was it merely accidental that he appeared at the one center of the world where Orient and Occident join, and where the three continents of Asia, Europe and Africa meet?

Four thousand years of history had prepared the way. The Sumerians of Ur, attaining the first high emergence of civilization, had passed on their heritage to Assyria and Babylon. The two contemporary civilizations of the Euphrates and the Nile had then poured their treasures into Crete and Greece, and those of Greece had been passed on to Rome. The conquests of Alexander and Caesar had unified the world in language and law. The Greco-Roman world had been united under the Roman peace, opened up by Roman roads and made one by the common tongue and thought of Greece. It was at last one world made ready for universal religion. Jerusalem was the center and Palestine the land-bridge between the civilizations of Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Persia, Macedonia and Rome. Ancient history had culminated in the two unique spiritual achievements of Israel and Greece. The Semitic nomads in the solitude of the desert had developed an ethical monotheism that was capable of becoming a world religion, while the Greeks had evolved a culture, a philosophy and a language that might qualify it and become an adequate vehicle of its thought and expression. This religion was to unite the moral and spiritual gift of the Hebrew with the intellectual genius of the Greek. It was the culmination and fulfillment of all religion.

Some centuries before Christ there had appeared the almost contemporary luminaries, Zoroaster, the Buddha, Confucius, Lao-tze, the prophets of Israel, and the successors of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. These had prepared the way for Jesus and his greatest disciple, Paul, who were to unite the two mighty

streams of Hebrew and Hellenic culture. The Roman world had sunk in moral helplessness. As Mommsen said: "The world was growing old and not even Caesar could make it young again." The old gods of Rome were dead or dying. There was but one of the seven faiths of the Mediterranean world that was capable of becoming a universal and permanent religion which could, from a center of ethical monotheism, with an assured basis in history, open wide its doors to the full assimilation of new truth from all sources in the future. In this prepared, yet old, sinful and desperately poor world, Jesus appeared with a message of good news: "The time has now come, God's reign is near: repent and believe the gospel." Here was a full and final revelation of the God of the Hebrews as the Father of all men, and of the *summum bonum* of the Greeks, that could assimilate all the findings of modern science as they appeared and furnish the motivation and drive of a religion that was both creative and revolutionary.

All the records are in agreement that Jesus had a unique consciousness of God, and all his followers were convinced that in some remarkable way God was in him. His baptism, and his call, "Thou art my son, in thee I am well pleased," may mark his conscious acceptance of his messiahship. His followers strove to express his unique relation to God by a bewildering wealth of names, titles and figures of speech. He was held to be the Messiah, the Son of Man, the Son of God, the Savior, the Lord and Master, by men who felt they must find a place for him within the framework of their ethical monotheism.

The spiritual experience of a new age, of a new relation to God realized by his followers, forced them to think and to express their experience in the greatest volume of theological literature ever stimulated by any character in history. For the first two centuries this thinking was, for the most part, spontaneous, various, unofficial, fluid.

It must be remembered that the period when men were forming their theological ideas, and the creeds were taking shape, was not one of scientific thinking. There were looser ideas of

personality in an age when men could believe that John the Baptist was the reincarnation of Elijah, and that Jesus was the reincarnation of John or of Elijah or Jeremiah. Jesus had, however, made such an overwhelming impression upon his followers that they were driven to identify this saving experience with the ultimate power in the universe.⁷ The church was compelled to state in rational, theological terms what could only be realized in faith and experience. As in the case of the doctrine of the two natures of Christ, human and divine, these theological terms usually represented some great spiritual truth, something that had real meaning in experience. But language can never compass or confine life. It falls far short of even describing it and its terms are never infallible.

Whatever the inadequacy of our rational statement, primitive and permanent Christianity alike must affirm both the humanity and the divinity of Christ. The denial of Jesus' humanity, which has been well called the last heresy of the orthodox, renders him irrelevant to modern life. But to think of him as man only, or even the greatest of men, also makes him ultimately irrelevant. Christianity as a *religion* historically began with a divine Lord. The resurrection means the discovery of the divine in and through Christ.

This discovery which makes Jesus the Christ in whom Christianity takes its rise is one which sets him forever apart. The vocation of other men is to be better and greater men, but ever and always to be men. Christ's unique vocation was to be God and to manifest God. That he became a better and greater man is a fact of secular history, but it is not the vital heart of Christianity as a religion. No other man had the vocation to be God in the unique sense that Jesus had. His duty was to deny himself as man; ours is to establish ourselves as men. He was unique, not in his manhood, but in his vocation.

Even the mildest Ritschlian Christology allows Jesus such uniqueness. Anything less is properly not a Christology at all. For a Christology is an attitude toward God and human life effected through Jesus. There is no salvation in any man or in

all men. Whatever its graces and its rationalistic appeal, a humanism which seeks to preserve the aesthetic values of religion without God is not Christianity. Unless the God of all grace and power was revealed and incarnate in the fallible human Jesus, Christianity is not true. Liberalism often destroys the divine side of the incarnation as rigid orthodoxy destroys the human.

At its foundation, Christianity has the record of a truly human and therefore limited and fallible Jesus who said: "Why callest thou me good? None is good, save one, even God." But at its center, if Christianity is true, is the living Christ of God, who said in the earliest record of his earthly sayings: "All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth who the Son is save the Father; and who the Father is, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him."

REVOLUTIONARY AND REACTIONARY RELIGION

However naturally it arose, later the church all unconsciously shifted its center from a way of life to a system of beliefs, from a revolutionary to a reactionary religion which gradually hardened into the dogmas of the later creeds. It proved much easier to hold correct opinions than to live a right life. It was more convenient to accept a doctrine, to repeat a form or celebrate a sacrament, than to sacrifice one's self for the rule of God. From the third to the seventh century the church had for the most part failed to seek first the Kingdom of God; instead it had become absorbed in the theological discussion concerning the true doctrine of the person of Jesus. The logical conclusion of this development was reached in the Athanasian Creed: "Whoever will be saved before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic faith. Which faith except one do keep whole and undefiled: without doubt he shall perish everlastinglly." This was indeed a far cry from the good news of the Galilean Jesus, calling men to repentance because the Kingdom of God was at hand. For this orthodox view of life would have been heresy

to Jesus. The church had now taken the place of the Pharisaism of his own day. It had indeed a new law, a new sacrifice, a new ritual, but not a new spirit. Salvation was still legalistic, theological and sacerdotal. Like the temple and synagogues of Jesus' day the church had become an end in itself, not the means of bringing in the one great end of the Kingdom of God on earth. It excluded and later burned its heretics, as Judaism had crucified Christ. Indeed, if the Galilean Jesus had returned to expose the sins of false religion in these later centuries, while he would have been welcomed by kindred spirits, orthodox or heretical, many of the religious leaders would have crucified him again.

With regard to the person of Christ, we may follow out either the Hebrew messianic or the Greek philosophic mode of thought — that suggested by the Synoptics or by the Fourth Gospel. We can trace back both views to our New Testament library, but we finally arrive at our simple initial statement that in some unique way *God was in Christ*.

Through Christ we recognize the fact of God's love and man's sin. Sin may begin quite naturally in the self-love of the child, but it develops through self-gratification and hardens into selfishness, which becomes a false center in life. Man asserts himself in place of God at this creative source of his being. All the godless world dictators are only ourselves writ large. Sin develops in the brutal struggle for existence in selfish greed, in false pride, in the prostitution of others to one's own ends, in jealousy and hatred of others which may have murder at its heart, as well as in all the subtleties of refined selfishness, of false religiousness and unconscious play-acting of pharisaic hypocrisy. Sin includes all wrong-doing against one's higher self, against one's fellow men and against God, as well as all falling short of what one might be.

And sin, thus defined, is a universal fact. We can seek no scapegoat in the myth of Adam as the single source of our inherited corruption. We are forced to recognize the truth at the heart of the old doctrine of original sin, though it is wrong

in its genealogy. The evil in me is not produced by nature, yet it is inevitable. Except in Jesus, every attainment of the higher possibilities of life, while it rises to new levels of good, also creates new possibilities of evil. It is only when we look full in the face of Jesus and his divinely achieved human goodness that we adequately see and feel our sin. And our guilt never stands isolated. The evil that man does flows into others and infects them so that none can bear the consequences of his sin alone. It also blinds, paralyzes or deadens man's nature so that his final redemption can come only from another.

Apart from all theories, we face the fact of sin and the fact of Christ. We do not have to explain evil. It is not peculiar to Christians but it is humanity's common problem. We have to admit it, grapple with it and overcome it. But it is just this which we cannot do alone. It is here that we need the help of God. Christ never tried to explain sin. He deepened and widened our sense of its reality, and somehow made men capable of overcoming and transforming it.

As Jesus did not offer a theory of sin, neither did he explain his death. When we have reached the limit of human thought no metaphysical theories ever adequately account for the person or the work of Christ. A doctrine is often a crystallized experience, a social pattern which expresses the spirit of an age. It was natural in the New Testament to explain the death of Christ in terms of the sacrificial system or of the Suffering Servant of the Old Testament.

The atonement was characteristically conceived under Roman imperialism, feudalism and the national monarchies. Augustine interprets the atonement judicially under the system of Roman law. Under feudalism the theory of satisfaction was natural, while under monarchy the idea of national punishment and punitive justice was emphasized. In an eighteenth century bourgeois economy the death of Jesus was conceived as a debt of obedience. The reformers emphasized the penal theory, while most modern writers have developed the idea on its ethical side, seeking to find its spiritual principle either in the sinless

penitence or in the perfect obedience of Jesus. No one of these is final or absolute.

The crude idea of a ransom or bargain, usually thought of as a transaction between God and the devil, held the field for many centuries until Anselm offered the satisfaction theory as an alternative to punishment. Most modern writers maintain that the death of Jesus exerted a moral influence upon men, rather than being a satisfaction or propitiation offered to God. The statement remains the simplest and most comprehensive of all, that God "was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." It was the act of God himself. It springs from the creative love of God, it expresses the supreme, voluntary sacrifice of Jesus, and it appeals to sinful man.

The modern conscience utterly repudiates the idea of the death of Christ as the propitiation of an angry God through the punishment of an innocent victim.⁸ Acceptance of this formula was supposed to purchase for the sinner release from punishment and instant salvation. In one branch of the church the benefit of this mechanical transaction was supposed to be communicated through magical sacraments. In another branch the benefit was to be received by intellectual acceptance, or correct opinion. By such a short cut realistic religion became pseudo-religion.

At Gethsemane and Calvary Jesus felt the utmost agony of the weight of human sin. The dregs of that cup meant to him not his own suffering and death, but total rejection and defeat, the failure as it were of God's own cause. The betrayal of Judas, the denial of Peter, the forsaking by the chosen twelve — these were the spearpoint of the rejection by a total humanity which he had sought to save. There was the final condemnation by the authorities, by the Sanhedrin, by all the rulers of his people after two thousand years of preparation. There was the judicial sentence of death by crucifixion by Pilate and the Gentile Romans,⁹ the mockery of the soldiers and of Herod, the fierce execration by the multitude that had hailed him in the earlier "Galilean springtime." No depth of shame was spared him.

Unutterable agony was in that heartbreaking cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me."

Dr. Cadoux describes the significance of Jesus' death as follows: "The ultimate triumph of God through Jesus came by men seeing in the suffering of his soul what their sin means to God, and so finding there the measure and assurance of God's love. . . . He was thus entering into God's experience of human sin. . . . In Jesus we see a completely self-giving devotion, which, by its power over us and especially by its power of making us recognize God's love in his, does effectively overcome the evil in us and make the good lastingly triumphant. . . . If man's being is thus of the outgoing and self-giving of God, then, if his will is one with God's will, he will be wholly divine. In him the outgoing of God in creation will have come home to God again in the oneness of will. That man in whom we find God as nowhere in the universe is Jesus: in the human freedom of Jesus' will God has the completeness of his own divinity."¹⁰

Jesus introduced men to a new experience of God. He cut away a labyrinthine forest of nonessential forms and the burdensome Law and tradition with their six hundred and thirteen commands and prohibitions upon which the scribes insisted. In the simple concept of the Kingdom Jesus gathered, centered and simplified religion for all time in the single universal essential of righteous love, which involved the complete spiritualization and socialization of all life.

Jesus had introduced a new type of life on earth. But during his lifetime men could not seem to follow his example. They could not even comprehend him. To the very last the chosen twelve were quarreling as to which of them should be the greatest. On the very last night they went out, one to deny him with oaths, another to betray him, and all to forsake him and flee. This Galilean carpenter had been killed, his followers were scattered, his movement crushed. His work lay in hopeless ruin about his tomb. It seemed that the religion of Jesus had died with him.

Then something happened. The accounts of the resurrec-

tion are fragmentary, confused and contradictory. The incontrovertible fact remains, however, that *only after the death of Jesus was Christianity born*. It rose, as it were, from the dead. Hence Paul begins with the resurrection, with Jesus as Lord, a religious datum from the first. The liberal conception of Jesus as merely the kindly Galilean teacher was utterly inadequate. The liberal Jesus was a fact, whereas Christ in history was a mighty belief, the potential of a dynamic experience. To know him we must approach him religiously, in faith, not merely empirically in critical scholarship.

If we endeavor to reconstruct from the contradictory accounts the actual events, we find that, despite all differences, the resurrection was to believers only. There were two loci of appearances, Jerusalem and Galilee, the latter the more primitive. The disciples had quit. Jesus had apparently failed in the only kind of messiahship they understood. They had returned to their old life, saying, "I go a-fishing."

Inside, where a man fights with himself, where the real things happen, the foothold that Jesus had gained is not completely broken. The beginning of the experience that they had known with Jesus — with its insights, hopes and aspirations — struggles and pleads, as it were, against the gloom and sodden despair that followed on his death. Peter, for instance, the leader, and the first to receive the resurrection according to the Galilean tradition, struggles with the memory of a Jesus he cannot forget. The condensed account is the symbol of a mental conflict long-drawn-out: "Lovest thou me, loudest thou me, lourest thou me?" It is with him day after day, morning, noon and night. And when his better self answers, "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee," he hears the words, "Feed my sheep," or as we would say, "Carry on." When Peter wearis of the unequal struggle in himself, and is willing to die to the world and rise to new life at his Master's call, then comes the inner experience of the resurrection. The adversary had asked to sift Simon as wheat, but when once he had turned himself he was to turn his brethren.

We must face the resurrection as a fact in earthly Christian

experience, whether subjective or objective. The tomb of Jesus is a man's own soul, his dead self, and the resurrection is through the door of his will. The materialistic Jew could conceive of it only as a resurrection of a material body and its appearances. But the resurrection was a subjective spiritual experience in response to the objective fact of a living Christ, whom death could not hold. It was an experience in the living God against the background of physical and spiritual death. It meant to the apostle Peter and the early disciples a new Jesus, a new Messiah, a new God, a new world, a new standard for man, a new hope for humanity. In its light all things had become new through an inner spiritual birth. The early disciples and later the writers of the Gospels reduced this experience and this demand to a formula which recapitulated the gospel in terms that could only be understood after Jesus' death: "If any man would come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me." Only in this spirit does Peter enter into the experience of the resurrection.

It is in this mighty experience that Paul cries: "I would know him in the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, with my nature transformed to die as he died, to see if I, too, can attain the resurrection from the dead." The apostle does not say: "Sit down and study the character of the winsome prophet Jeremiah, or of the Galilean teacher Jesus, and painfully copy or imitate his life." He had tried to imitate or obey for half a lifetime and had disastrously failed. He is not even interested in knowing the earthly Jesus after the flesh. That may be the method of nineteenth century liberalism or rational humanism, but it was not and is not Christianity, as the earliest disciples knew it, for that begins with the resurrection. The resurrection is either an unbelievable superstition or an overwhelming spiritual fact — a fact of experience. And one's own inner experience must determine which it is. Either we are living in a world that is God's world, or in a world and life that are godless. Jesus is the touchstone of destiny between the two. He created a revolution in religion. When Jesus faced the

ancient religion embodied in the chief priests, and the Roman Empire in the person of Pilate, it was a crisis in the history of humanity. Jesus was put to death but he was soon the living center of a revolutionary religion. The world was in ferment. In a few centuries Christianity swept the world. When the Roman Empire fell, its place was taken by Christendom.

The death of Jesus was not the final fact, for the days that followed upon his death witnessed the most wonderful outburst of moral and spiritual energy the world has ever known. Jesus' influence, which had seemed partly ineffectual even upon the inner twelve, became suddenly intensified, multiplied and universalized in an inner experience that was now available for all men. Generically, men entered into the same experience of God that Jesus himself had known. They attempted to do even greater works than he. It was a life so self-evidencing and spiritually validating that it was independent of the visual evidence of an empty tomb, or of bodily appearances, objective or subjective. As Jesus had been before them, the disciples were now centered in God and were sure of God. It was the very inward life of "this same Jesus."

Men who had known him intimately, like Peter, were convinced that they had seen him again. They never doubted to their dying day that he was "alive forevermore." The experience was as sure and satisfying in Saul of Tarsus, who had never known him in the flesh. Saul experienced a conversion on the road to Damascus that revolutionized his whole life. On the human side there seems to have been a volcanic psychological upheaval from his unconscious self. It may have been "the triumph of a repressed recognition of Jesus." But no psychological or metaphysical explanation — or lack of it — alters the fact that this man was changed for all time. With a strangely Christlike character Paul now became the greatest spiritual force in the Roman Empire. As though by an extension of the incarnation he could now say, "Christ liveth in me." He had experienced a spiritual rebirth and resurrection when "it was the good pleasure of God to reveal his Son" in him.

The resurrection appearances of Christ, recorded a whole generation after his death, seemed only to give symbolic expression to the real spiritual presence of Jesus with his followers. The resurrection implied "that personalities are supremely dear to God; in the face of which it is impossible to think that God would not want to maintain them in life after death. While to suggest that he might not be able to do what he would like to do, would imply that the supreme value was without ground in reality; and it would mean that God used personalities as mere means and tools to an end beyond themselves. . . . Jesus bids us found our faith in the hereafter on the reality of a personal relation between God and man. . . . A universe that could let Jesus cease to be would be too stupid and weak to have produced him."¹¹

By many the attempt to find adequate expression for their new experience was met by tracing Jesus' origin to a virgin birth. The tenacity with which the birth stories have been held show that they met a deeply felt need. When God's supreme activity was connected with a miraculous act of creation, which was conceived as high above the ordinary processes of life and history, then it was natural to think that justice could not be done to Jesus except by regarding him also as the result of a miraculous intrusion.

The word "virgin" used by Isaiah (7:14) is a Greek mis-translation of the Hebrew word meaning young woman. There are two views of the manner of Jesus' birth held in the New Testament, the one natural, the other miraculous. We find no mention of the doctrine of the virgin birth in any Gospel written before A.D. 80, or within fifty years of the crucifixion. Even then it is confined to three verses in Matthew and two in Luke. The birth story in Luke (1:34, 35) does not seem to have been part of the original account. In Luke's later narrative Mary speaks of Joseph as Jesus' father. The two genealogies are artificial; they do not agree and both trace the descent of Jesus through Joseph. Throughout the Gospels, save in these two opening birth stories, Jesus is referred to as "the son

of Joseph," and there is no hint of anything unusual in his birth. Mark, Paul, the author of the Fourth Gospel and the other New Testament writers do not mention any virgin birth. Either they did not know of it or they ignored it. Paul and John, the two writers who speak most convincingly of the deity of Christ, never speak of a miraculous birth.

To save Christ from the supposed taint of original sin the Roman Catholic Church was compelled to declare the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary also. But if Christ was a heavenly being without human heredity, was he truly human, was his divine nature capable of sin, and if incapable, could he be tempted in all points just as we are? Would not this remove him from us, vitiate the power of his example and militate against a sense of the real comradeship of Christ? Was not this demand for a virgin birth postulated upon a lower conception of material nature, with its implication that the sex life of man is necessarily unclean and sinful? If so, the natural conclusion was the exaltation of virginity as higher than married life, with the resulting emergence of asceticism, under which the best men fled to the caves of Egypt or to the monasteries of Europe. As we have seen, this led to the fatal dualism of a degraded, material world and a miraculous supernature, which must intrude upon or violate the natural order if man is to be reclaimed.

We have seen that in our inspired library of the New Testament, and during the entire first and much of the second century, there was wide freedom of belief as to the person and work of Christ. There were, however, two principal types of thought. On the one hand, Jesus was the man whom God had chosen and in whom the Spirit of God dwelt. He was thus, according to his own testimony, adopted by God. This was the origin of the "adoptionist" Christology.

On the other hand, the Greek view, held by the writer of the Fourth Gospel and its later adherents, proclaims Jesus a heavenly spiritual being, who became incarnate at his birth. This "pneumatic" Christology led on to the Logos doctrine of Greek philosophy, in which the earthly life of Jesus is the

continuation of the pre-existent Second Person of the Trinity.¹² Under this view it became increasingly difficult to preserve the reality of Jesus' humanity.

In the evolutionary process all life is hereditary from our human and prehuman ancestors. The mastery of this heritage of instincts by the progressive integration of personality becomes our human problem as it was that of Jesus. The achieved human goodness of Jesus, in the face of real temptation, even to the height of the love of enemies, becomes the permanent asset of our common humanity. He becomes the first-born of a great brotherhood, in the divine plan of God that takes in the whole sweep of evolution, from the first astronomical and biological beginnings to the consummation of the cross of Christ. Dr. A. T. Cadoux concludes: "There is only one way of regarding Jesus as both truly divine and human, and that is by seeing in him the culmination and creative focus of an incarnation that began with God's outgoing and self-giving in creation and persisted until it found victorious achievement in Jesus. . . . If we start with belief in a God whose eternal self-giving is known in Jesus, then we see in Jesus the truth of what God was, is, and ever shall be to men. . . . For we start from the affirmation that man is akin to God, made by God of the very being of God. Man's achieved goodness is thus the revelation and assurance of God's goodness. . . . Jesus is thus the full emergence of the divine immanent in the universe."¹³

THE INEVITABLE CREEDS

Although Christianity began as a way of life, it was inevitable that it should in time become also a way of thought. Men had to think and think freely. Thought expressed led to discussion and controversy. When the divided churches faced the Gnostic and other heresies that often embodied the worst aspects of Greek philosophy and the superstitions of the mystery religions, they had to close their ranks against the false thought which led inevitably to evil living. Dogma became that which "seemed good" to the best thought of the churches.

The two views of the person of Christ of the Synoptics and the Fourth Gospel were contending, not about mere metaphysical subtleties, which had no bearing on devotion and life, but for the very heart of the Christian faith. Both were trying to express that which mattered most, that it was really God who was in Christ and God who was reconciling the world unto himself. Both views for the first two centuries were equally orthodox. One was based mainly upon the Hebrew and the other upon the Greek view of life. Both believed that "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son."

By A.D. 150 the brief confessional formula regarding the Father, Son and Spirit, required at the baptism of believers, had been developed in the church in Rome. This became the basis of all the later creeds and it was held to be the "catholic faith." By the third century the catholic standard became widespread. Certain unproved assertions had now to be made that such a confession, or creed, had emanated from the apostles themselves, that it had been preserved by the churches without modification, and that the bishops derived authority by an unbroken apostolic succession.¹⁴

Thomas Aquinas says: "The Holy Spirit is God as he is everywhere and at all times." Our threefold experience is thus of the infinite Power in whose continuous self-giving all life has its being in the on-going process of creation; of the life so begotten of God that we recognize its divinity in Jesus; and of the energizing and fellowship of the Spirit of all good, working in us to do his will in the rule and reign of God on earth.¹⁵

The baptismal confession had only a few clauses before A.D. 200. It was religious and positive in character, with no theological definition and little negation of error. Its aim was historical reality and moral responsibility rather than metaphysical theory. The following is the received text of the Apostles' Creed. Words in italics, such as *he descended into Hades*, are not in the oldest traceable form of the "old Roman creed" but are later additions:

"I believe in God the Father Almighty, *maker of heaven and*

earth, and in Jesus Christ, his *only Son, our Lord*, who was *conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of Mary the Virgin, suffered under Pontius Pilate, crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into Hades*; the third day he rose again from the dead; ascended into the heavens, is seated at the right hand of *God the Father Almighty*; thence he is about to come to judge the living and dead. I believe in *the Holy Spirit, the holy church catholic, the communion of saints, forgiveness of sins, resurrection of the flesh, life eternal.*"

Only after Christianity became the religion of the Emperor Constantine was it possible for members of the scattered churches of the world to meet in council to seek to ascertain the mind of the church as a whole. Such an "ecumenical" council represented the "inhabited world." The first and most important of these, the first Council of Nicea, was convoked by Constantine in A.D. 325. This settled the controversy between Arius, who held that Jesus was not God but the highest of created beings, and Athanasius, who held that the Son was "begotten," not created, "of the same substance" with the Father. The dispute was settled in favor of the latter.¹⁶

A NEW CREATION IN CHRIST

To recapitulate, it is a commonplace that Christianity is Christ, but the import of this truth often escapes us. Christianity took over the Creator God of the Jews and based itself upon him. Christ is the redeemer as distinct from the Creator. Redemption, or Christ, means two things: the cross and the resurrection. The cross means the divine negation of the human race, in Barthian terms the divine "no." Man is freedom. But this freedom, which from one point of view is his glory, is from another point of view his destruction. For freedom is also separation. Man is separated by sin from his own potentially better nature; he is cut off from his fellows; he is sundered from God. Not only is this true of individuals; it is particularly true of social wholes. Since what man does is based on what he is, he cannot obey his own best self.

A history of culture might be written in terms of these clefts or gulfs of separation in human life. On the mental level, for instance, Hegelianism is an attempt to unify the sundered world. On the practical level, Marxism is an attempt to reunite the broken world in a classless society. Man recognizes that the gaps must be bridged or that life will destroy itself. Since, however, the chasm underlies every attempt to bridge the chasm, man's independent attempts must inevitably fail. The Greeks recognized this. Greek tragedy shows how all life fails. Not only the common or evil man but most of all the good or great man is helpless. Man ever frustrates himself and dies from evil. But man cannot die *to* evil; he can only die *from* it. There is one possibility. The death man dies may be from God! Here is a way out. By faith man sees that God sends him to death. This is the cross.

But Christ means also the resurrection. God who has destroyed man now creates afresh. As man has died *by faith*, so now he lives *by faith*. That is, he believes God has executed a fresh creative act in connection with him. By *sight* he is the same old man; by *faith* God has made him a new man. Further, his belief has practical effects. He literally brings into the world new energies which are not simple human possibilities but have creative quality.

Crucifixion and resurrection together constitute redemption. To believe in them is to believe in God in a new manner. To believe in redemption is to believe in God as redeemer. The magnitude of this step is such that it is reflected necessarily in an enrichment of man's ideas of God. Within the one God are found both Creator and Redeemer. The Creator becomes the Father of Christian theology. The redeemer is the Son. The Son is both pre-existent and adopted. The Son is in the Jesus of history and is also in those who are "in Christ."

The incarnation must not be confined to a Galilean who lived two thousand years ago. On the one hand, this real man was related to the Christ by faith and through the operation of the Spirit. Indeed, he was the first to be so related and is the his-

torical medium of revelation to others. But in his relation to the Christ, Jesus is on the same footing with us. By faith he died to sin and by faith he was given a new and miraculous life. This conception involves a new attitude to the baptism of Jesus. In so far as he was social he was involved in the sins of society and must acknowledge one man's share in them. As he is not set apart from us in the matter of character, so we are not set apart from him in the matter of faith. That is, the faith by which we are incorporated in the body of Christ should be no different nor any less costly than that by which Jesus entered into it. Unless we were at Calvary with Jesus, we have no part or lot in redemption.

The profound first chapters of Genesis show that man was made good but became evil through his own act. But in the long run it is an untenable position to reject the redeemer and maintain the Creator. This was the great point of Anselm in his *Cur Deus Homo*. The reason for this is that in a world of sin a just and holy Creator can only destroy. Thus destruction is the last word of God. Unless he has a later word in resurrection there is no way out even though he created an endless number of new worlds. For resurrection is a new creation or reconstruction. The thing reconstructed is fallen man. The life of fallen man is history. Therefore, redemption is the redemption of history. That is, while man remains in this world he lives by faith in the crucifixion and resurrection of history. Also his faith releases new energies for the betterment of history. At this point we hold that Barth is wrong, for he does not believe in the redemption of history.

In opposition to this the Christian man must live by faith in God's work in history and must mediate the divine energies in history. Thus he works with all social revolutionaries, but his hope is better established than theirs. He is a conscious fellow worker with God. The atheist is an orphan in a soulless universe that is not guided by intelligence and purpose. All his achievements are made possible by God ever at work in his world both in those who know him and in those who as yet

know him not. The secular radical believes neither in the cross nor in the resurrection, consequently he lacks the power of spiritual creativity. Yet this is not completely true. Even before and outside of the Christian revelation there is something of redemption in "the light that lighteth every man." In this the Jews participated, as in Isaiah's hope of a redeemed remnant after the Exile. Also the secular radical participates in this redemptive situation, though not fully. This is the importance of Christianity for radicalism. For revolutionary Christianity is full belief in the redemptive Son. The holy war of the Catholic Church on communism shows that it is farther from the revolutionary religion of Jesus than communism is. Christ and revolution are not far apart.

What then is the meaning of Christ? Jesus has for us the meaning of God. He holds for man the value of God. He is the final revelation of the character of God. He is the human life of the divine, the concretion of the divine immanence. He is "God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God." He is all of God that can be expressed in man. He is all of man that can be expressed in the divine; man divine in origin and in the potentiality of sonship, but always and everywhere limited and fallible.

And what is the meaning for our conception of God? We see the God of the Old Testament — creating, redeeming, ruling — revealed in Christ in his threefold work and nature. What the inner nature of God is, in and for himself, man can never dogmatically assert. But in the experience of man the full white light of the being of God seems to pass through the threefold prism of God creating, whom we know as Father; God redeeming, whom we know as the Son; God ruling, in the ever widening circles of his Kingdom, as the Spirit.

NOTES

¹ Adolf Harnack gives us the following definition: "Christianity is that religion in which the impulse and power to a blessed and holy life

is bound up with faith in God as the Father of Jesus Christ. . . . The gospel is the good news of the reign of God. . . . The principal elements of Christianity were faith in God and in his Son." (*Outlines of the History of Dogma*, pp. 1, 16.)

² To the Jew God was the one omnipotent, omniscient Creator who was to be loved with all the heart. To the Greek God might mean one of a superhuman class of beings, a philosophical concept easily developing into an impersonal pantheism at one extreme, or a crude polytheism at the other. To the modern humanist God may be an impersonal principle, or a "totality of values," etc.

³ Evelyn Underhill, *The School of Charity*, p. 14.

⁴ "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. . . . And God created man in his own [spiritual] image. . . . And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good."

⁵ *Jesus of Nazareth*, pp. 379, 389.

⁶ A. T. Cadoux, *A New Orthodoxy of Jesus and Personality*, pp. 142, 143. Our debt to Dr. Cadoux throughout this chapter will be evident.

⁷ Paul seems to have been convinced that Jesus had pre-existed as a divine being, while the author of Hebrews believes him to be the agent of creation. Cf. Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 1:19, 20; Heb. 1:2, 3.

⁸ Even the modern conscience, however, is not final or absolute. It may be driven from liberalistic moralism to a profounder realism. God, in Jesus' conception, rules through suffering. On the plane of history man's conscience is moved by innocent suffering, for the innocent cannot demand immediate justice at every moment. The atonement exhibits the paradox of a loving and an "angry" God. As Rauschenbusch says: "In the ruin of dead empires we have read how thou hast trodden the winepress of thine anger when the measure of their sin was full." (*Prayers of the Social Awakening*, p. 114.)

⁹ Of Jesus' execution Dr. Klausner writes: "Crucifixion is the most terrible and cruel death which man has ever devised for taking vengeance on his fellow man. Cicero describes it as the most cruel and horrifying death, and Tacitus refers to it as a despicable death. It came from Persia where, apparently, it arose out of the desire not to suffer the condemned victim to defile the earth, which was sacrosanct to Ahura Mazda (Ormuzd); thence it passed to Carthage and so to the Romans, who employed it as a punishment for rebels, renegade slaves and the lowest types of criminal. . . . Scourging always preceded crucifixion: so Josephus twice informs us. This was a horrible punishment, reducing the naked body to strips of raw flesh, and inflamed and bleeding weals. And when afterwards the victim's hands were nailed to the crosspiece and his feet tied (or nailed) to the base of the beam, leaving the sufferer unable to drive away the gnats and flies which settled on his naked body and on his wounds, and unable to abstain from

publicly fulfilling natural needs — nothing could have been more horrible and appalling. None but the Romans, whose cruelty surpassed that of ravening beasts, could have made choice of this revolting means of death."

¹⁰ *A New Orthodoxy of Jesus and Personality*, pp. 166, 134, 170.

¹¹ A. T. Cadoux, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

¹² "Logos" was the Greek translation of the Hebrew conception of the Word, or uttered Thought of God, based on the expression in Genesis, "God said." The Hebrew writer of the Fourth Gospel uses this term to arrest and help Greek readers, though preferring himself the personal and concrete term "Son." With the term Logos metaphysics began to enter into the texture of Christian faith. It was the master idea of the higher thought of that day, a great middle term between Christians and educated Gentiles. To the Greeks it meant the divine principle of reason behind all things, or the Stoic law of nature. It became the central category of a Christian philosophy of the universe.

¹³ A. T. Cadoux, *op. cit.*, pp. 128, 138.

¹⁴ Canon B. H. Streeter in his *The Primitive Church* thus concludes his study: "There is one result from which there is no escape. In the primitive church there was no single system of church order laid down by the apostles. During the first hundred years the church was an organism alive and growing — changing its organization to meet changing needs. . . . It may be that the line of advance for the church today is not to imitate the forms, but to recapture the spirit of the primitive church." (Pp. 261, 262.)

¹⁵ A. T. Cadoux, *op. cit.*, p. 171. Dr. Cadoux concludes: "The fundamental assertion of this doctrine of the Trinity is still a necessity of thought." "The Catholic faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in unity." About the beginning of the third century the Latin term *trinitas* came into use as denoting the Three mentioned in the baptismal formula of Rome; but only in A.D. 381 was the Holy Spirit affirmed to be a Person equal with the Father and the Son, and the Holy Trinity became an element in the catholic belief, affirming that the threefold activity of God emanated from three persons in the godhead. It may have been a legitimate implication but the doctrine of the Trinity is no more a part of the good news or revolutionary religion proclaimed by the Synoptic Jesus of Nazareth than the elaborated creeds of Christendom or the ever expanding truth in the discoveries of modern science.

¹⁶ There were seven ecumenical councils before the division between the Latin, or Western, and the Greek, or Eastern Christians: Nicea, 325; Constantinople, 381; Ephesus, 431; Chalcedon, 451; Second Constantinople, 553; Third Constantinople, 680; Second Nicea, 787. The Vatican Council of 1870 is regarded by the Roman Church as ecumenical. Roman Catholics and Greek Orthodox hold that the decisions of the seven

ecumenical councils were infallible and the reformers still held fast to the Nicene and Athanasian creeds. Under the idea of Caesarism, or the demand of the secular power to dominate, Constantine banished the North African bishops; he interned Arius for refusing to accept the decision of Nicea and then banished his opponent, Athanasius. Political pressure and personal jealousy were sometimes mingled with the honest search for truth in the creation of the differing creeds, which do not appeal to most critical modern minds as infallible.

VI

BIPOLAR RELIGION: PERSONAL AND SOCIAL

THE CHRISTIAN gospel, as a whole message of life, is of necessity both personal and social. It is so because of the constitution of man's nature, the social and the personal being the reciprocal poles of his development. It is so because of the history of religion at its best, which always begins as a social function, ideally leads to the development of individual character, and should finally culminate in a new society. It is so because of its background and source in Judaism which includes both. Here the social predominates. The social prophets, like Amos, historically come first, and the full development of personal religion comes very late, in Jeremiah. The Christian gospel is both personal and social because of what Jesus himself was and did and taught. True religion for him is primarily personal, but it is also inevitably social in its effects.

His call is to all Israel as a social entity, but it is also addressed to individuals who are to repent one by one. But for what are they to repent? It is not to obtain their personal salvation in some future heaven of bliss. Jesus was not an evangelist calling men to believe in some mechanical transaction or vicarious creed for their own selfish salvation. His whole message centered in the Kingdom of God. Men were to repent because the Kingdom was at hand, that God's will might be done on earth in a new divine social order.

This was the social goal of all history. We recall that even H. G. Wells says that Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom of Heaven meant the beginning of a new world. Karl Heim, the

German philosopher, thus concludes his study of *The New Divine Order*: "The New Testament message is completely individual yet it is completely 'a social gospel.' . . . Thus the message which unites the individual conscience with Christ must at the same time be a force to revolutionize all forms of society." Ernst Troeltsch, at the conclusion of his two massive volumes on *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, shows that the Christian ethos gives to all social life its final goal. The idea of the future Kingdom of God stimulates human energies, making the soul strong in the certainty of an ultimate, absolute meaning and aim for human labor. It creates a perennial source of strength for strenuous activity. Troeltsch concludes that the Kingdom of God is already within us; but it must also come in the world without, which must be all leavened — that is, spiritualized and socialized — to an ever growing approximation to its perfect ideals.

ONLY A BIPOLE GOSPEL IS REVOLUTIONARY

When, toward the close of his ministry, Jesus was asked what was the first or supreme commandment, he answered: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hangeth the whole Law and the prophets." And these were the basis of the Christian gospel as well, which the Law and prophets were to fulfill. By the grace of God a man who believed in Christ might become his follower and enter upon the fulfillment of all life in the love of God and man. Salvation was no fictitious state where a man might be reckoned to be something he was not in reality becoming. Love implied the full sharing of life with God and man, it was "an eternal will to all good for all men."

When the lawyer to whom Jesus is speaking asks, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus sums up for all time his idea of love and of the social implications of his Kingdom in the matchless para-

ble of the Good Samaritan. A man who has been robbed, beaten and left half-dead is passed by on the other side by the priest and Levite, who are occupied with the professional duties of their formal religion. But an outcast Samaritan gives himself to the man in need and shares all that he has with him. The seeker after eternal life is bidden to go and do likewise. Thus, every man in need is my neighbor and my obligation to him is met only by my sharing with him and with all society to the very limit of my ability.

This is indeed a great gospel, for Jesus is here working a revolution in the conception of religion. The history of the Jewish people has been unique in being religious through and through. Their religion had been an intense and continuous realism, the organizing principle both of their social and individual life. But their religion had been almost exclusively national, membership in the community depending upon birth and religion. Hebrew religion comes to its logical conclusion in Jesus, who discovers the potential spiritual basis for all humanity. He rests community between men not upon nationality, race or religion, but upon the basis of a common redeemed humanity. "Who is my mother and who are my brethren? Whosoever shall do the will of my Father." Jesus finally universalizes religion and bases it and all society upon the practical sharing of life.

The Kingdom of God thus becomes the ideal for the possible unification of all human beings in a single community irrespective of race, nationality, sex or creed. This conception of a universal community of mankind was not only a revolution in thought. It was the expression of the purpose of God for human life, the true nature of man himself grounded in the nature of reality, the conscious end of human effort and the goal of history. Jesus was not interested in thinking or writing history but in making it.

We may ask today, Who is *our* neighbor? He is not found merely in some isolated case for individual charity. All about us multitudes of our brother-men have been despoiled and

robbed of their heritage. As we write, nearly a third of the industrial workers of Great Britain are in the distressed areas where many are struggling to live on approximately four shillings a day for a family of three. Far greater is the need in the rural slums of rich America, where a third of the people are declared by President Roosevelt to be "ill-fed, ill-clad, and ill-housed." If the robber is not the individual owner of the land, of the slums, and of the means of production as the beneficiary of the system, then it is the heartless *system* itself. Even if an impersonal system is to blame, the condition of the impoverished is none the less abject, nor is our duty less plain. If Christian love means "an eternal will to do all good for all men," it implies not merely paternal charity for an occasional beggar at our gate, but the abolition of the system itself which is destroying brotherhood and daily robbing multitudes of all hope and of an abundant life. Our economic system has become as impossible for the full development of human life as that of Pharisaic religion in Jesus' day, and like that early system it must be abolished or completely changed. Such is the judgment of revolutionary religion not only upon Pharisaism but upon modern capitalism.

The implications of the social gospel are not limited to a few key texts as in the passages referred to above. The social and personal elements are the inextricable warp and woof, the very texture of the gospel. When Jesus announces his mission in the synagogue at Nazareth it is as one anointed to proclaim the good tidings of his Kingdom to the poor, release for captives, sight for the blind and liberty for the bruised. We shall find that his fourfold Kingdom implied justice for the poor, liberty for the enslaved, abundant life for all, realized in a potentially universal brotherhood. These were the universal needs of all men and they were to become the class-conscious demand of the exploited of all humanity. His mission was to be the fulfillment of the Jewish year of jubilee when every man was to go out free, with the restoration of his own liberty and possessions. This great liberation from economic bondage was intended as

the periodic, democratic assertion of the liberty, equality and fraternity of God's people who were not to become "two nations," or warring classes of rich and poor, but were meant to remain a classless society or brotherhood. The monstrosities of modern capitalism were never contemplated by the prophetic religion of righteousness of the Hebrews nor by revolutionary Christianity.

When Jesus calls the twelve it is not primarily as evangelists to individuals but to proclaim his coming social Kingdom. The Sermon on the Mount culminates not in personal piety but in seeking first and always this all-embracing Kingdom. The Lord's Prayer centers in a single petition, "Thy Kingdom come," i.e., "Thy will be done *on earth*." It was not to be made a mockery by being postponed to otherworldly bliss. In the final crucial challenge at Caesarea Philippi the whole gospel is summarized, and it culminates, not in individual salvation, but in the coming of the Kingdom in power, or the rule of God on earth. At the final crisis, when the sky is "red and lowering," Jesus drives the money-changers from the temple and proclaims the doom of the old order, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the ultimate triumph of the coming Kingdom. As we have seen, his one continuous message from the first moment when he appeared in Galilee to the forty days after the resurrection was this same social consummation of the Kingdom.

When the power of a Niagara is harnessed, the electric current flashes light, heat and power to toiling cities of burden-bearing men. If the current is short-circuited at the powerhouse it may become, like a stroke of lightning, a blasting and destructive force. If the whole gospel, full circuit, girdles the globe in the love of God and man, it has the potency of light, heat and power, adequate to all the needs of men. If it is short-circuited to petty personal ends, even the selfish salvation of the individual's own soul, to the exclusion of a whole world of human need, then it is not the message of Christ but "another gospel" devised by our own narrow hearts. It is thus that radical religion, which is always of necessity both social and

personal, has become selfish, individual pseudo-religion, which is always reactionary and an antisocial opiate. It was not accidental that Jesus refused to take a deadening drug at his crucifixion. But modern religion is drugged and doped. It is soporific. It needs the dynamite of Jesus' revolutionary religion, which is both destructive of the false and creative of the true. Christ in the creative individual and Christ in the social revolution are the two poles of a religion that can make life whole.

Jesus not only taught this gospel. He lived it. He was the gospel. His whole life was the expression of the divine will, utter devotion to God and man. Salvation for the Jew had always been social, with individual participation in the redeemed Israel. Ideally a selfish Christianity is as unthinkable as a selfish Christ.

Not only did Jesus himself exemplify the whole gospel; the early church, which was conceived as the body of Christ, as the extension of the incarnation in a new humanity, was also its embodiment. The community of Pentecost, sinful as it had been, was fused in love in a new and burning fellowship. In a voluntary spiritual communism the early disciples had all things in common and counted nothing as their own. They had heard Jesus' repeated and terrible denunciation of selfish wealth; they had heard him bless the poor because they were to inherit the earth and its riches. They had heard him say, "Every one of you who will not part with all his goods cannot be a disciple of mine." For many generations, as Harnack points out, "almost all the great Fathers of the church gave expression to utterances such as these: 'Private property is the root of all strife'; 'Possessions in common, that is, equal ownership, is the natural and original order of things'; 'Beyond what a man requires for his absolute needs, all that he has belongs to the poor'; 'The luxury of the rich is the robbery of the poor'; 'What the poor ask is not thine, but their own.'"¹

When a child which was claimed by two women was brought before King Solomon so that he might decide who was the real

mother, he bade his soldiers cut it in two and give half to each mother. Had his command been carried out there would have been not two children, nor even two half-children, but two fragments of putrefying flesh. When men thus rend and tear asunder Christ's organic gospel, trying to divide it into two fragments, personal and social, they have not two gospels, nor even two half-gospels, but two half-truths, the one selfish and therefore sinful, the other shallow and impotent. Each by itself, if it excludes the other, is not real religion at all, but pseudo-religion. And we are left with an impotent and divided church in an anarchic world — a world, and a church, of rich and poor, possessors and dispossessed, owners and owned, in an intensifying class conflict drifting toward industrial warfare and the holocaust of another world war, which threatens our "Christian" civilization. We have transformed and disfigured revolutionary religion into reactionary capitalism.

When we sever the personal and the social, one faction proclaims its orthodox formula for saving souls, but under a law of diminishing returns. The other is left to its often shallow and external social service. Neither is adequately producing either individual character or a new society in the image of Christ. When Lord Shaftesbury, almost alone, was battling for reforms to abolish child labor with its appalling toll of mortality, he complained that few of his fellow Christians gave him any aid, especially when their financial interests or private profit were at stake. The abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison declared that "American Christianity is the main pillar of American slavery." When a former archbishop of Canterbury said that he worked seventeen hours a day and had not time for the unemployment problem, Keir Hardy, the great Christian labor leader, replied: "A religion which demands seventeen hours for organization and leaves no time for thought about starving men, women and children has no message for this age." Thus for the modern church our house is being left desolate while we are asking in impotence, Why could not we cast it out?

THE CAUSE OF OUR IMPOTENCE

If our Lord and Master were to return today would he not have to begin with a call to repentance to each of us, to begin over again, as he did to the religious people of his own day? And would he not place before us the same social goal of the Kingdom of God as the object of our repentance? That Kingdom was in our midst when Jesus was on earth. It is within us even now, in all who have found this hidden treasure, this pearl of great price. It is working like leaven still in the world today, a world which, bad as it is, is no worse than was the Roman world of his day. And whatever be the times or seasons, the manner or fashion of the Kingdom's coming, its consummation or even approximation in a new social order is still "that one far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves."

The late Bishop Gore, who was both an individual saint and a social prophet, says in his *Christ and Society* that the present condition of society and international relations inspires in our minds a deep sense of dissatisfaction and alarm and "*a demand for so thorough a reformation as to amount to a revolution.*" He shows that these evils are the fruits of human blindness, willfulness, avarice and selfishness on the widest scale. They require a fundamental change in the spirit in which we conduct our industry and maintain our international relations. He says that we should expect the alteration of these conditions to arise from the influence of groups of men inspired probably by prophetic leaders. Bishop Gore shows that Mr. Tawney's *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* has in this matter of wealth spoken a decisive word for England. It is a grave and just charge against post-Reformation religion as a whole that it allowed itself to become individualistic and thereby falsely otherworldly. The very sacraments were originally social ceremonies involving the social obligation of brotherhood in communities of voluntary sharing and fellowship. But unfortunately the later church became a body which the social

reformer or the labor man regards as something on the whole alien to his ends and aims, and which he finds irresponsible and dull. The church was making money and unmaking men, leaving the glaring contrast between idle wealth and ignominious poverty. In the economic palliatives of the Salvation Army for tramps and drunkards as the products of our economic system the church can find no alibi for abandoning its one task of bringing in the Kingdom.

The "Copec" Conference in Great Britain — the Conference on Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship — maintained in each of the twelve volumes of its report, as did the more recent Oxford Conference, that "the basis of this conference is the conviction that the Christian faith rightly interpreted gives the vision and the power essential for solving the problems of today, and that the social ethics of Christianity have been greatly neglected by Christians, with disastrous consequences to the individual and to society. In the teaching and work of Jesus Christ there are certain fundamental principles which if accepted not only condemn much of the present organization of society, but show the way of regeneration. In the light of its principles the constitution of society, the conduct of industry — in fact all human relationships — must be tested." Yet if we examine our social and industrial life we find appalling damage to physical life, the banishment of beauty, the absence of freedom to develop personality, the hostility and mistrust which poison industrial relations, and economic strife between classes and nations culminating logically and inevitably in a series of world wars. In the light of these Christian principles which we have had for nineteen centuries, our present civilization, like that of Babylon of old, is weighed in the balances and found wanting.

TWO STREAMS OF INFLUENCE

As long as the church was possessed by a revolutionary gospel, it was a powerful factor for good and often for revolutionary change. Contemporary reports of its work read like

a romance or like the conquests of an advancing army in the field. Do the annual reports of our home and foreign missionary work, and especially of our home churches, read like those of the early days when ardent believers had a more revolutionary gospel to proclaim?

Of Paul and his companions it was said, "They that have turned the world upside down are come hither." Pliny, the governor of Bithynia in Asia Minor in the second century, alarmed at the rapid spread of the new revolutionary religion, reported to Trajan that Christians met together before day-break, sang a hymn to Christus as a god and bound themselves by an oath not to commit any crime. He says: "The infection of the superstition has spread not only through the cities but into the villages and country districts." Justin Martyr writes: "There is not a single race of human beings, barbarians, Greeks, nomads or herdsmen living in tents, where prayers in the name of Jesus the crucified are not offered up." Clement of Alexandria can claim: "The word of our teacher did not remain in Judea alone, but was poured out over the whole universe, persuading Greeks and barbarians alike."

Tertullian declares, also in the second century: "We are but of yesterday. Yet we have filled all the places you frequent — cities, lodging-houses, villages, townships, markets, the camp itself, the tribes, town councils, the palace, the senate and the forum. . . . Christ has now won the whole round world by the faith of his gospel. No race now lies outside God, the gospel flashing over all the earth and to the world's boundaries." Origen writes: "All Greece and the barbarian part of our universe contain thousands of zealots who have deserted their ancestral laws and the recognized gods."

Lactantius says: "No nation now is so barbarous and ignorant of mercy, that it has not been turned by this love to modify its harsh ways, and come over to a peaceful temper by the acceptance of peace." Eusebius writes: "Churches of tens of thousands of men have been brought together by these very deficient and rustic persons — churches in the greatest cities, in the imperial city of Rome itself, in Alexandria, in Antioch, in all

Egypt, in Libya, in Europe, in Asia, and among all nations. I am compelled to confess that they could not otherwise have undertaken this enterprise, than by a divine power which exceeds that of man."

The Christians were most numerous in Asia Minor, which had been practically christianized, then in Armenia, Antioch and Syria, Egypt and the coasts of Greece, Italy, Gaul, Spain, North Africa and throughout the Mediterranean world.²

We have seen that the Christian gospel, whenever its whole message is apprehended, is always and of necessity bipolar, including both personal and social elements. But it is not always or even often so realized by contemporary Christians. Men are so small in their vision and experience that they tend to grasp only one of these two poles. Since the personal is the more immediate, since it appeals more to self-interest and does not involve strenuous self-sacrifice, it is the one usually emphasized. Just because in isolation it is only a half-truth it does not lead to the full development even of personal character. He that seeks or finds his own life only, loses it.

As might have been anticipated from the bipolar or dual nature of Christianity, two streams of influence have flowed from it throughout history. An exclusive emphasis upon the personal element tended to develop isolated, conservative and selfish religion. It developed propriety, tradition, "law and order," institutionalism and vested interests. It naturally appealed to the majority as easier and more popular. It usually identified itself with the privileged and ruling class in society. What was at first good news offered to the poor became the comfortable possession of the rich and of the middle classes dependent upon them.

On the other hand, the social emphasis of the gospel, whenever it was the expression of vital personal religion, tended to be radical, to challenge existing evils as represented by the money-changers in the temple of the old system, to lead to repeated reform, reformation or even revolution, whether in spiritual or material matters.

A purely selfish personal religion, often unsocial or even anti-

social, was natural and highly useful to such a convert as Constantine. The sacramental salvation of worldly individuals became embodied in the medieval Roman Catholic Church and was wedded to the congenial structure and spirit of feudalism.

Luther accepted obedience to state control and loyalty to secular rulers however evil, and founded a church well prepared to accept a ruthless totalitarian state which had as much divine right as the church. After he turned his back on the peasants and favored the princes in the peasant war, in which tens of thousands were shot down, the Lutheran Church never again regained its appeal to labor and the poor until Marx came to challenge privileged and comfortable religion across a yawning gulf of class strife. Calvin and the later Protestant and Puritan theologians inculcated the virtues of thrift, honesty and money-making until Protestantism became the buttress of the whole bourgeois capitalist industrial order, as Catholicism had been of feudalism. The church had now almost nothing to do with organized labor, or with the poor, save for paternalistic charity.

Such a conservative church, whether Catholic or Protestant, became, with the state, one of the twin pillars of the *status quo*. After the third century the church prevailingly justified war. Constantine took the cross as a military emblem, a talisman of war, and by A.D. 416 non-Christians were forbidden to serve in the army; "so the meek and peaceful Jesus became a God of battle." Mr. Lecky maintains that with the exception of Mohammedanism no other religion has done so much to produce war, while John Morley says, "More blood has been shed for the cause of Christianity than for any other cause whatever."³

The church made no decisive challenge to the institution of slavery during most of the first eighteen centuries, although it enjoined kindness upon masters and mitigated the harsh Roman legislation with regard to slaves. The Roman Catholic Church to this day has never officially denounced and forbidden slavery. In America the southern writers of *Slavery in the Old South* found that practically all churchmen during the first half of the

nineteenth century, as well as all educational and political leaders, by an easy rationalization completely justified slavery. Where their financial interests were concerned men of the north often took the same attitude. Every church in Boston — a city that had profited much by the earlier slave trade — closed its doors to William Lloyd Garrison when he demanded complete abolition. Slavery was embedded in the American constitution as it was in the Bible.

The church came into alliance with the possessing classes in Bourbon France, czarist Russia and Catholic Spain. As a thoroughly antisocial force it was often counted the friend of the rich and the enemy of the poor. It is a terrible reflection on the record of the church when the masses of the people, suddenly freed from the violent repression of the state, begin to burn churches and kill priests. Where they regard the church as their worst enemy, as in czarist Russia and in every revolution in modern Spain, they reveal their attitude toward the hierarchy that had left them in poverty and illiteracy. We need not multiply examples to prove that the church, once it lost the revolutionary religion of Jesus and the Kingdom of God, was prevailingly conservative, and often reactionary, not only in the matters of war, slavery and economic justice, but on nearly all questions that concerned radical reform or involved a change of the social order.

On the other hand, arising from Christ himself and from the Christian conscience, there has been a radical, a reformatory and often a revolutionary tendency throughout the centuries. Again and again a prophet, a group, or a small minority has arisen to assert the Christian way of life and to apply it to the evils of the time. This radical tendency had its origin partly in the doctrine of the Kingdom which was to come, not by inevitable gradualness, but by apocalyptic suddenness. All through history the small group, the courageous minority, has demanded reform or initiated revolution. Nietzsche, in his *Use and Abuse of History*, shows that the culture of the Renaissance was produced by a group of not over a hundred

men. Less than a hundred intellectual leaders made possible the French Revolution. An equally small number, followed by the masses of workers, peasants and soldiers in the street, stood with Lenin when in a day he seized the capital of the largest country in the world, and his followers today rule the largest single section of the globe. Majorities usually conserve the gains of the past, but small minorities have led nearly all the sweeping changes of history.

This has been especially true in Christian history. Jesus, his twelve fishermen, and his great disciple Paul of Tarsus, transformed national Judaism into a universal religion. The price was crucifixion and several generations of intermittent persecution. The apostle Paul and a dozen or more fellow workers founded the church throughout the Roman Empire. In almost every century small groups strove desperately to return to Christ's simple and complete gospel, both personal and social. In the middle of the second century, under Montanus in Phrygia, near the region of Paul's Galatian churches, a movement was inaugurated for the supremacy of the contemporary prophet as against the ever conservative priest. The movement spread rapidly through Asia Minor, North Africa and Europe, appealing powerfully to the common people. They claimed the promise of the Spirit for immediate guidance and inspiration.

The great monastic movements all began as desperate attempts on the part of earnest men to recover the way of life of Jesus and to incorporate it in a Christian society or fellowship. Whatever their limitations, the monasteries were islands amid a sea of worldly corruption which kept alive personal piety and at least some measure of missionary zeal and social service. St. Benedict in the sixth century, after spending three years in a cave in solitary prayer, founded his austere order, which spread over the world. In the thirteenth century St. Dominic and St. Francis of Assisi founded their orders. St. Francis is pictured by Giotto as carrying on his bowed back the enormous weight of the church, after the pope in his dream had seen the collapse

of the worldly church and had commissioned Francis and his twelve Little Brothers of the Poor to found a new order. Ignatius Loyola after his conversion, spending seven hours a day in prayer with austerity and long fasts, called his six fellow workers to consecrate themselves by taking vows of poverty and chastity in the little church in Paris before they went out across southern Europe and Asia to call men to repentance and to follow Christ.

The thirteenth century not only produced the brotherhoods of the Franciscans and Dominicans but it was a period of incubation for new life. The spirit of democracy was abroad, issuing from Judaism and early Christianity. There was a growing revolt from authority; the people were beginning to demand their rights and privileges.

Many brotherhoods and sisterhoods were founded. The sisterhoods of Beguines not only renounced all property and lived lives of devotion, but went out into the world, founded model villages and were as social leaven in preaching and service. In the fourteenth century Meister Eckhart of Germany, the profoundest of mystics, poured out his life in loving service. In this same century the "Friends of God" once again claimed a renewal of the long suppressed prophetic gift. They believed in the apocalyptic coming of the Kingdom and found in it motivation for heroic service. The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries produced the Brethren of the Common Life. Italy gave birth to saints and servants like Catherine of Siena, England had Walter Hilton and Lady Julian, and Holland a great mystical brotherhood. They not only lived an inward, first-hand spiritual life and produced such literature as *The Imitation of Christ*, but the movement, while prevailingly personal, "worked miracles" and brought about social changes as well.

In the fourteenth century John Wyclif as a prophet again called the church to return to the original religion of Christ with its radical and social implications. Opposed as a heretic, he turned from the teaching of Oxford scholars to the common people of England. He organized a band of popular preachers

or "evangelical men" of the Lollard movement. Their revival of evangelical religion led to the work of John Huss, and to the later Reformation. The movement spread in spite of the famous statute "for the burning of heretics" in 1401.

These often persecuted minorities had an unbroken history throughout the nineteen centuries, though much of it was unwritten. The tragic and persecuted Anabaptist movement appeared at the dawn of the Reformation in almost every country, in little groups of men and women determined to reconstruct a Christianity of a more radical type after the New Testament model.

In the seventeenth century George Fox (1624-91), the founder of the Quakers, appeared as a contemporary prophet. Through a series of profound inward experiences Fox felt himself commissioned to preach what he believed to be a revival of apostolic Christianity. Discarding dogma, ritual and ecclesiasticism the Quakers stood for an inward life and experience lived out in the world. They championed the cause of all the less fortunate classes and races of men and believed in the reconciling and transforming power of love. It seems incredible to us now that the simple peripatetic ministry of George Fox should have been interrupted by frequent imprisonment as a "blasphemer." He spent six years in prisons, often amid terrible conditions, until his physical frame was shattered. It also seems incredible that American colonists should have put Quakers to death on Boston Common. Rufus Jones has traced *The Church's Debt to Heretics* in a long line of men, who, like George Fox, revived the radical society-transforming element of original Christianity.

More than twenty million Methodists and Wesleyans throughout the world recently celebrated the two hundredth anniversary of the little meeting in Aldersgate Street that marked the conversion of John Wesley. That event, as the historian Green records, opened a new epoch in British history and changed the moral tone of English society. Many believe it saved Britain from the violence of the French Revolution.

The meeting that began with less than half a dozen in the little upper room of the Wesleys and later with Whitefield at Oxford was another effort to return to the whole gospel of Christ. Certainly the movement was intensely personal and had powerful social results. It is difficult for us at this date to realize why, merely because they preached the primitive gospel, every church in London closed its doors to these men and drove them into the wilderness, like their Master before them, or to realize why they should have had to face raging mobs and sometimes violent persecution simply for being real Christians.

In the nineteenth century movements too numerous to mention attempted to revive and apply Christ's whole gospel. Following the work of Lord Shaftesbury (1801-85) for the oppressed came that of the Christian Socialists (1848-54). Simultaneously with the writings of Coleridge, Thomas Carlyle and Ruskin came the work of Frederic Dennison Maurice, of Charles Kingsley, Thomas Arnold, and Neale on behalf of workmen's associations for cooperative production and distribution, later for trade unions, for better housing, sanitation and the abolition of child labor. The work of these men and of others, though bitterly opposed by the majority of Christians, culminated in the Reform Bill of 1867, which marked the beginning of a new social era.

From 1870 to 1920 there were tendencies towards a turning away from the extreme individualism and class selfishness which had characterized the social attitude of both state and church in Great Britain and America. The work of Charles Booth and Rowntree in London, of Henry George in his *Progress and Poverty*, of the Fabian Society and the Socialists, of the Christian labor leader Keir Hardy, of the Labor party which was often led by devout Christians, and of a hundred other movements revealed the awakening of the church's conscience and the growing demands of the masses for full economic justice and a larger life. Walter Rauschenbusch, Washington Gladden and others were at first lonely prophets of the social implica-

tions of the gospel in America. So widespread has the movement become that a purely pietistic message of personal "salvation" seems selfish and irrelevant to awakened youth, to masses in labor, and to all who are outside the churches.

The chief point in all that we have been saying is this. While the church as a whole has been prevailingly conservative and often socially reactionary for the greater part of the nineteen centuries since Christ, the redeeming record of Christianity has always been made by prophetic spirits and courageous minorities who have dared to proclaim Christ's message of the Kingdom of God on earth, and to apply it to contemporary social problems, as they have called on individuals to repent for the building of a new society.

In the world of today, which faces a rapidly changing social order, through war or revolution, by violence or nonviolence, we believe that reactionary religion is doomed. Only revolutionary religion, with the bipolar experience of a whole gospel, can claim the future.

NOTES

¹ Adolf Harnack and Wilhelm Herrmann, *Essays in the Social Gospel*, p. 32.

² Most of the above quotations are from Harnack's *Mission and Expansion of Christianity*, II, 4-22.

³ C. J. Cadoux, *The Early Christian Attitude toward War*, pp. 52, 245.

VII

EVOLUTION OR REVOLUTION

WE SAW in our opening chapter that Christianity, in order to play its part in the modern world, was forced to come to terms with modern science. It had either to remain in the prescientific age of Genesis or accept the Copernican view of the universe. It had next to come to terms with evolutionary biology or remain in an archaic and mythical world of unreality. If it was to be guided into all truth, science was its ally and not its enemy. But it is much more imperative that we should understand the modern economic world and have right relations with our fellow men than that we should hold correct views of astronomy or of biology, for there is where we live.

The application of natural science in the practical nineteenth century gave rise to a growing movement for social and economic reconstruction. This reached its climax in the philosophy of Karl Marx and his demand for a new social order. The part played by Marx in the understanding and making of the modern world is even more epoch-making than the work of Copernicus or Darwin in their day. Whatever may be the defects of his system — and we shall find there are many — we must make an earnest effort to understand and critically to evaluate it. We must apologize if we take nothing for granted as to the amount of previous knowledge of some of our readers and attempt to state as simply and clearly as we can the most important elements in Marx's system.

Marx was born of a long line of Jewish rabbis and derived

more of his system from Jewish and Christian sources than he ever realized. The passion for justice and the proclamation of good news for the poor were fundamentally moral and religious demands. These had been the burden of prophetic Judaism and the message of Jesus.

During his first ten years in London as correspondent of the *New York Tribune*, Marx had at times to pawn his clothes and "was hardly over the verge of starvation." While Darwin was devoting twenty years to his hypothesis of evolution, Marx worked for three decades, often sixteen hours a day, on his social system. What Darwin did for biology Marx did for sociology. Each was the leader of a movement which became a great historic watershed.

Probably Darwin and Marx have influenced the thought and action of multitudes in our day more radically than any other writers of the nineteenth century. And more millions of men in the world today are following two members of the Jewish race than are following any other men who ever lived — Jesus of Nazareth and Karl Marx. There is an adequate reason in both cases.

Marx and Engels founded a German workers' society and joined the League of the Just, which later became the Communist League. At its second congress in London in 1847 Marx and Engels were commissioned to draw up a statement of the basis of the organization. This appeared in 1848 as the *Communist Manifesto*, which gave a philosophy and a program of action to the gathering movement, as Rousseau's *Social Contract* had to the French Revolution.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF KARL MARX

Marx's teaching resolves itself into three principal elements: a philosophy of history, an economic theory, and a practical program for the realization of a new social order.

We may sum up these three principal positions as follows:

1. His philosophic method, *the dialectic process*, maintains that evolution in nature, history and the human mind is through

the conflict and resolving of opposing forces. His philosophy of history, in its *materialist or economic interpretation*, holds that the principal influence which shapes human progress is the method of economic production in each period.

2. His labor theories of *value and surplus-value* endeavor to show that the workers who create value receive less than they produce, under a system where the owners of the means of production appropriate the surplus.

3. His theory of social development is that the *conflict of classes* is the driving force of history, which leads, through the inner contradiction of an economic system, to its ripening and decline, to the end of one epoch and the birth of the next.

Marx's practical program foresees the organization of labor unions, the waging of the class war and the setting up at the appropriate time, upon the breakdown of the old order, under the *dictatorship of the proletariat*, the new socialist state, which is ultimately to bring in the final, classless society of communism. Each of these we shall briefly examine before proceeding to a criticism and evaluation of the system.¹

Hegel borrowed the term "dialectic" from the Greeks, who had employed the word as denoting the art of discussion by discourse and rejoinder, the search for truth by the bringing out of contradictions and antitheses in the open conflict of opposing views.

According to Hegel, not only all matter and mind but the entire universe is in motion in the evolutionary process. The dialectic process is one of progress realized through conflict. In a logical statement of this process we have first a positive assertion of something; then the contradiction, the antagonistic element, or negation; and finally the negation of the negation, or the reconciliation of these two opposites in a higher unity. Thus there are a thesis, a challenging antithesis, and then the interpenetration of these opposites until they are resolved in a higher synthesis. Somewhat arbitrarily Hegel forces all the movement of nature, of history and of the human mind into the mold of his dialectic.

Hegel saw all nature and history as one majestic process of development propelled by the idea, the eternal thinking process, the absolute or divine mind, in creation, negation and recreation. Marx accepts his dialectic formula and method, but in place of the abstract and mystical idea he substitutes economic forces as the dynamic of change. In place of Hegel's idealism he substitutes his own realism. Instead of making the material world the mere vestment of the reality of the idea, he makes the material world the basic reality and man's ideas "the material world reflected by the human mind and translated into terms of thought." He believed he had thus taken Hegel's dialectic and "turned it right side up."

Marx in his economic determinism, or materialist interpretation of history, does not hold that man is actuated only by material motives. His studies had convinced him, however, that the *chief* factor in social change was not geographic environment, nor the ideas of an age, but economic conditions, especially the method of production of the time. If, for instance, in successive periods there is slave labor, then the feudal windmill, and later the industrial steam mill or factory, these will affect not only the lives of the owners and workers but also the institutions of the period and finally its ideas.² Thus the key to the development of society is economic struggle and the means of production of any period create their own type of economic structure and division of society into classes, as between masters and slaves, lords and serfs, owners and wage dependents.

For Hegel, all history is but the development of the idea of freedom. Marx also sought ultimate freedom through the overcoming of economic determinism by the establishment of a classless society. Economic forces dominate society only until society takes control of these forces. In the meantime each class is governed by self-interest. While rare individuals may sacrifice their economic interests for the welfare of society, classes as such never do so. "In every epoch," says Marx, "the ruling ideas have been the ideas of the ruling class."

These are today exercised through the control of the press, the cinema, the wireless, the school, the church, industry and government. The owners of the means of production dominate each epoch, whether they be the workers in Soviet Russia or the capitalists in the West. Marx offered the workers a method of understanding and of *making history*. Man can change his environment and himself, for he is meant for freedom.

Marx, as a realist, held that things are prior to ideas, action is more important than thought, and practice more important than theory. The brutal economic facts of life determine its thoughts. Man must seek freedom for his spirit by the control of economic necessity, especially of the means of production for his material life. There must be no escape in a dream world, even of great thoughts like those of Plato and Hegel. *Theory and practice are one.* Knowledge is no longer an end in itself. A true philosophy is only an instrument for creating the good life for all. This is what it means to be a true realist. We must change the brutal external facts of life, remake man's environment and then man's own nature. This is the dialectic march of progress through the interpenetration of opposites.

VALUE AND SURPLUS-VALUE

Marx was a great sociologist rather than a modern scientific economist. He may be ranked as the first great economic historian, or as the last of the school of classical economists. These included Adam Smith (1723-90), Ricardo (1772-1823), and Marx (1818-83). These early economists sought to find a theory of value to account for the variation in prices. The first two found value to be the result of "natural law" and therefore presumably just. Marx accepted Ricardo's theory that labor was the basis of all commercial values but dropped his idea of natural law and revolutionized his classical economics.

Political economy arose as the apologetic of a social order and it is often such to this day. Ricardo was the apologist for the bourgeois and Marx for labor. The early classical econo-

mists believed that as the economic order was ruled by natural law it was in stable equilibrium. Marx showed that the system was full of inner contradictions, in unstable equilibrium. He challenged the liberals' claim that liberty, equality and fraternity were provided by the system and proved that these were not realized by the helpless workers. The system meant freedom for the capitalist and exploitation for labor.

Marx in his labor theory of value sought a universal principle of social valuation, or "real cost." He made the unit and cause of value an hour of socially necessary labor, of a given degree of intensity and skill, applied according to the normal technique of an industry. Commodities should exchange in proportion to the socially necessary labor hours required for their production.

The owner of the means of production bought the labor power of the worker. This was a mere commodity that had to be quickly sold at whatever was offered if the worker was not to starve. Under "freedom of contract" and laissez faire individualist economics the worker thus became primarily a commodity rather than a member of society. Wages were as low as possible and gravitated to the cost of maintaining the laborer. Labor produced more than it was paid and the balance was taken by the owner for his profit. In a given number of hours labor created enough value to earn its wage. The balance of its time went to the creation of "surplus-value," which formed the reservoir from which profit, interest and rent were drawn by the owners of the means of production.

Profit was the exploitation of the value of labor and its product. It was not the result of a natural law but the special privilege of a private system of ownership. Value, profit and wealth were social products but they were not socially shared. They were chiefly appropriated by the few fortunate owners of the land, raw materials and machines. The fault was not that of the individual employer but of the system, just as the "good" slaveowner was not to blame for the evils of slavery, but the system itself. Marx does not look upon slavery, feudalism and

capitalism primarily as moral wrongs but as necessary historical epochs. The mission of capitalism was to open up and multiply the forces of production, to create abundant material wealth for all. Its function was production, not distribution. Adequate distribution was impossible where a few owned all the means of living, for each class always seeks first its own interests. The owners make the profit but will never justly distribute it. This is human nature. One cannot ask men arbitrarily to change their nature; rather it is the outworn system of private monopolistic ownership which must be changed. To expect to change human nature, without changing the environment, would be like asking water to run uphill. As long as one man is left in the keeping of another, at the mercy of another, injustice is certain.

An undue proportion of surplus-value was bound to go to the monopolist owners. This wealth the few could not possibly consume nor spend upon themselves. They were forced to invest it as capital for the production of more wealth, in ever growing production and overproduction. Labor would always receive too little in wages to purchase this increasing overproduction. This would inevitably create a series of crises of depression and unemployment of ever growing intensity until finally the system would break down because of its inherent contradictions. Thus, as truly as slavery and feudalism before it, and for the same reason, capitalism was doomed.

Under this system the ever multiplying forces of production and the progressive limitations upon consumption lead to anti-social consequences. When many are hungry and cold, commodities are deliberately destroyed to raise prices. There is a growing concentration of wealth and power for the few and growing discontent for the many. It is idle to tell the unemployed and the exploited wrecks of the system that skilled workers have privileges and luxuries which princes did not enjoy in former times. There is not increasing misery and an absolute decline in the workers' standard of living. Relatively, however, labor never receives an adequate share of the value in

the creation of which it is the chief factor. Marx says: "Profit and not use is the leading motive of capitalist production. Capitalism is shaken to its very foundation if we make use and enjoyment and not profiteering the leading motive of production."

For a time the system is maintained by the extension of capitalism to imperialism. The raw materials and labor power of backward or helpless peoples are exploited in the colonies and conquered areas of the capitalist nation. But this only multiplies the contradictions and injustices of the system. Greater crises, world depressions and world war are the inevitable results of this class system of strife when projected upon an imperialist scale.

Starting out from the idea of the exploitation of labor, which is despoiled of the surplus-value which it creates, Marx tries to show that there is a necessary and irreconcilable antagonism between master and man, owner and wage-worker. He says: "Accumulation of wealth at one pole is, therefore, at the same time accumulation of misery, agonized toil, slavery, ignorance, brutality, mental degradation at the opposite pole, that is, the class which produces its own product in the form of capital."

After centuries of the teaching of benevolent idealism, of more generous charity, or of the optimistic hope of evolutionary liberalism that the conditions of labor will be radically improved and that the employers in due time will give the workers all that they deserve, the followers of Marx are still able to point to the brutal facts of wealth unshared side by side with poverty unrelieved, because of the divorce of the masses from the ownership of the instruments of production. They are able to show that their economic helplessness results inevitably in the denial of equality in personal freedom, in justice, in education, in culture, in health, in privilege of all kinds and in political power. As truly as when Marx made the indictment in 1848 natural resources are still being wantonly wasted and human beings exploited. It is still true, and more glaringly apparent than when he wrote, that crises of growing intensity

occur with world depressions, and that the economic system culminates in periodic wars.

Marx in *Capital* thus describes the ripening and fall of capitalism: "As soon as this process of transformation has sufficiently decomposed the old society from top to bottom, as soon as the laborers are turned into proletarians . . . then the further socialization . . . takes a new form. One capitalist always kills many. Along with the steadily diminishing number of the magnates of capital, who usurp and monopolize all advantages of this process of transformation, grows the mass of misery, oppression, slavery, degradation, exploitation; but with this too grows the revolt of the working class, a class always increasing in numbers, and disciplined, united, organized by the very mechanism of the process of capitalist production itself. The monopoly of capital becomes a fetter upon the mode of production, which has sprung up and flourished along with and under it. Centralization of the means of production and socialization of labor at last reach a point where they become incompatible with their capitalist integument. This integument is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated."

Marx's theory was one of natural right; it was the application to economics of the principle of human equality. He discovered that value was a social product, that labor was not a mere commodity, that it was being exploited and that such an unjust system could not and need not continue. He shows that a few own the bulk of the earth — its raw materials, factories, banks, instruments of production and means of living — and grow rich by a system which compels the majority to work for them for a bare living wage. Is the system just? Must it continue? No! Marx shows the masses a way out. It is a way, he tells them, grounded in science and in natural law. It is bound to win, for the very stars in their courses are fighting for them. Is it any wonder that in spite of its ponderous economic theory, despite its defects and inconsistencies, the burning heart of the message of Marx has gone straight to

the heart of labor all over the awakening world? That is the ultimate test of a prophetic truth and of the application of truth to human need and human history.

CLASS CONFLICT AND A PROGRAM OF ACTION

Marx sees the world growingly divided by private property into conflicting classes of possessors and dispossessed, and the driving force of history as the struggle between these two classes. He does not desire or create these classes but finds them already in existence. He and Engels describe many primitive communal societies with common ownership of land. But with the rise of private property society becomes divided between master and slave, then lord and serf, and later industrial capitalist and wage-worker. Marx holds that their interests are sharply antagonistic and irreconcilable. The employers will buy labor power as cheaply as they can, labor will sell its power for as high a wage as possible; but the wage-worker is in a poor position to bargain, as he must work or starve. This gives an enormous advantage to the owner of the means of production for the control of almost all of life. Marx says: "The modern state authority is nothing more than a committee for the administration of the consolidated affairs of the bourgeois class as a whole."

The sociological principle, or dialectic, of progress through conflict is the cause of change. Marx makes the sweeping assertion in the opening of the *Manifesto* that "the history of all human society, past and present, has been the history of class struggles. . . . More and more society is splitting into two great hostile camps, into two great and directly contraposed classes, bourgeois and proletariat."

Man's business is to make history, which Marx defines as "the activity of man in pursuit of his ends." He says: "Hitherto, philosophers have but variously interpreted the world; it is now their business to change it." He also says: "By acting on the external world and changing it, man changes his own nature." Marx's philosophy is one of social action. He furnishes the

fighting philosophy of the great mass movement. Feudal society in its trade and commerce produced a commercial class which, as an outcast "third estate," became antagonistic to the ruling class of feudal landowners, and in struggling for its rights led to the destruction of feudalism and the building up of a more advanced capitalist society. Capitalism was a mighty achievement and was itself the result of class struggle. In the same way the now outcast proletariat, or fourth estate, is driven to struggle for its rights as each of the now privileged classes has in turn done before it.

Marx was a fighter, and such a man can best be understood by the things he fights against. For four and a half decades he fought against an unjust economic order and its defenders of privilege, against the philosophic idealists who were not realistic, against mechanistic materialists and fatalists who did not leave room for man's freedom under mechanistic determinism, against romantic and utopian socialists and sentimental religionists who would not implement their theories by effective action nor organize to bring in a new epoch, and against selfish individualists who did not see the necessity of a class movement.

Competition is the war of all against all, where even the workers compete with one another. The class struggle in the thought of Marx was a war to end war. In the Marxian dialectic, or conflict of opposing forces, the capitalist class furnishes the positive or conservative thesis, the proletariat is the negative antithesis, which must finally triumph by abolishing itself and its opposite of private property. This leads to the final synthesis in the establishing of a new social order where the means of production will be owned and operated in common. When the conflict becomes acute between the material development of production, with all the evils of the machine age, and the social form of the discontented and unemployed proletariat, the time is ripe for the leap from evolution to revolution.

Marx held that the working of the same inexorable laws of dialectic conflict which had overthrown slavery and feudalism

would, with scientific certainty, bring about the disintegration of capitalism and the rise of socialism. There were various causes for this, which he enumerates in the *Manifesto*. These causes of the disintegration of capitalism include the concentration of wealth and production, the absorption of the middle class, the growth of unemployment, the increasing sense of wrong and the misery of the workers, the increasing severity of crises, the rise of organized labor and a militant working class.

Marx believed that as the working class increased in numbers and as its condition became worse in recurring depressions, it would become more class-conscious and unite for its own protection and the achievement of its destiny. Class conflict cannot be resolved without changing the whole structure of society. The state as the agency of the interests of the dominant class will always cultivate the propaganda that the state is above all classes and that all are one and have identical or harmonious interests. Every legal code and educational system will declare this. The church, which is composed chiefly of the possessing classes and those dependent upon them, will usually be the ally of the state and the defender of privilege. Strikes will be broken by the force of the government which always stands in defense of the *status quo*. But in the end the workers will learn that only through class struggle can they attain their rights. And they will achieve them. Such were the teachings and predictions of Marx regarding the class struggle.

Whatever mistakes we may find in the positions of Marx, they certainly served to remove the inferiority complex of masses of workers. Some of his prophecies have been fulfilled in the disintegration of the capitalist system. There is no contradiction of this trend in the experience of fascist countries under dictatorship, if fascism be understood as the last phase of decaying capitalism or the last struggle of the middle class in the effort to save itself.

The words "class war" and "revolution" have an ugly sound to patriots. They do not object to a war of independence to establish their country, a civil war to preserve it, a world

war to make it "safe for democracy." These are the results of patriotism. But any revolt of the workers is counted sheer sedition. Such are the traditions of a class conditioned to glorify war and abhor revolution. There is nothing more sacred about a nation than the wider humanity of which it is but a part, nothing more sacrosanct in a territorial than in a functional community. The propertied class and their white-collar dependents will naturally be loyal to the nation which gives title to their possessions. So long as there are classes of possessors and dispossessed, or what Disraeli called "two nations," the rich and the poor, so long will there be discontent and class conflict. *Class strife is, indeed, a present fact and no honest realist can ignore it.* There is no possible ultimate solution save to abolish these classes by providing equal justice for all, either by evolution or by revolution. History reiterates that if the possessing class will not give equal justice, the dispossessed will take it, just as the capitalist class themselves wrested power from their feudal superiors. There was nothing more sacred in their former struggle than in that of the workers today.

The chief point of Marx's economic theory is the impossibility of ever securing justice under the present class structure of society and the imperative necessity of replacing capitalistic private ownership of the social means of production by collective ownership and control. It is just this all-important point that the average capitalist or the average religionist cannot see because of his economic blind spot. He does not see the fact of class ownership, control and profit and its appalling consequences.

Most members of our democratic community and most conventional Christians think of our society as if it were a democracy of economic equals. They believe that all should co-operate in the maximum production of goods and the creation of profit, trusting to the generosity of the owners justly to share it. We should rely on "love and brotherhood" on the part of the owners in distribution and on the part of the workers in production. What that really means is that we should all

cooperate for the perpetuation of a system of organized injustice and exploitation.

Such a view is not only unrealistic but it is false to the facts. Such cooperation with injustice offers no final solution. It is not individual owners who must be entreated and improved, but a system that must be changed. And until we see this we simply cannot understand the modern world, just as the Bourbons could not understand the volcanic revolution that was becoming daily more inevitable. For this innocent but blind misreading of the facts spells revolution.

Revolutions are almost inevitably blindly destructive. They occur only when evolutionary progress to justice is blocked by the class in possession, when the hard crust of the *status quo* restrains the molten lava of discontent until the volcano of revolution bursts into eruption. Nearly always the possessing class is blinded by its own self-interest and class ethics of property "rights," so that it cannot see in time the injustice of the system which seems hallowed by custom and tradition. This class fondly believes that trouble is due to "agitators," that if people would only be quiet and content the present unjust system could be indefinitely perpetuated. They do not see that class conflict is already here and must be faced, and that they themselves, rather than agitators, have created it.

In classical theory the state existed to secure the interests of society as a whole. In prevailing practice, however, under the class divisions created by private property, not the well-being of the masses but the privileged classes became the chief concern of the governing class. Criminal law was often more severe upon offenses against property than against the person.

The state is necessarily the embodiment of force, and force habitually upholds the *status quo*. It is a special organized public power of coercion which exists to enforce the decisions of any group or class that controls the government. But force is also the method of revolution. Those in revolt believe they are driven to use force because it will be employed against them if they do not.

No class has ever been known to surrender its special privi-

leges and share them equally with the dispossessed, unless it was forced to do so. With the anticipated growing disintegration of capitalism, chronic unemployment, the failure of the mechanism of credit and the private banks, the breakdown of the machinery of production, distribution and exchange, there will be strategic crises. Organized labor is urged to lead the class-conscious struggle with strikes, riots and mass demonstrations. When the psychological moment comes they are to seize all the key positions, political and economic, and the state itself. Once the state has been seized the workers are bidden to establish a dictatorship of the proletariat under the direction of the vanguard of the workers, the Communist party. The party then seeks to make the revolution permanent and to carry it through until all the members of the ruling and possessing classes are deprived of power.

Marx considered a dictatorship of the proletariat as better than the present dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, for in a class society economic justice and social equality are impossible. It seemed to him that as the present order was established by and is founded on force and will never yield its monopoly of privileges to any reformist evolutionary procedure, there was no other way than to meet organized force with force. If he were living today he would suggest that hesitation in the use of necessary force would result only in the establishing of a fascist tyranny, as in Italy and Germany and as in the case of the French Commune in 1871. He would point to the moral and intellectual renaissance that followed the French Revolution and the creative energy released by the great upheaval in Russia. Indeed, the whole Russian revolution is almost the complete embodiment of all his principles and programs. It was the belief of Marx, as it is of all communists today, that the costs of a short violent revolution are far less than the appalling death-rate from chronic slums, poverty, unemployment, malnutrition and recurring wars. Therefore they believe that their ultimate purpose is not to destroy, but to save human life, which our unjust order is already wantonly destroying.

It is interesting to note that Marx thought in 1872 that the

United States and England might prove exceptions and that the workers in these countries might win justice without the necessity of a violent revolution. In his speech to the workingmen at Amsterdam he said: "Some day the workers must conquer political supremacy. . . . Of course, I must not be supposed to imply that the means to this end will be everywhere the same. . . . There are certain countries, such as the United States and England, in which the workers may hope to secure their ends by peaceful means."³

The state, which was originally organized as an instrument of class dominance, is supposed in time to disappear under a classless society. After a temporary dictatorship, whose sole object should be to build a socialist society as quickly as possible, the ideal of "production according to one's capacities, and distribution according to one's needs" would be achieved. Rigid state socialism will end in communism. People will have learned right habits and the government will be a mere organ for the administration of production. The political state will then "wither away."⁴

The followers of Marx, during and after his lifetime, like those of every other great philosopher or religious leader, divided into various competing schools of thought and action, each of which claimed to be carrying out the real purpose of the master. Of these there were four principal movements or schools of thought. The "orthodox" Marxists, of whom Karl Kautsky of Germany was the leader, turned Marx's philosophy of social revolution and his program of immediate action into an evolutionary science of respectable social development, which began to compromise with reformist, and then with nationalistic, and later even with militaristic and imperialistic practices. In the end the Social-Democratic party became the chief support, together with the Catholic Center party, of the Weimar constitution and the republic. They accepted the plums of office but they were weakened by compromise and corruption.

The German revisionaries under Bernstein swung still farther

to the right from Marx's philosophy of radical revolution. Revisionary socialism became a kind of religion and a moral code which must win its way by peaceful persuasion.

The syndicalist heresy developed in France as a critical reaction to Marx, accepting some of his doctrines but repudiating others. In France and Spain, the influence of the anarchist Bakunin was powerful. The trade unions, suspicious of political parliamentarism, lined up solely on the economic front and adopted the general strike as almost their sole weapon. This was an isolated, ineffectual instrument which could terrorize but not construct.

It was Lenin who challenged and repudiated the three foregoing deviations from Marx and recalled the movement to its original purpose. He held that reform and compromise would never bring the socialist state, nor would it come automatically by evolutionary progress.

Marx was the giant intellect and social philosopher, and Lenin the greatest practical revolutionary, who ever lived. It has been the part of Stalin to guide the Russian dictatorship through the series of five-year plans which seek to build socialism. In spite of its forced and cruel haste, collectivization has given Stalin the third place in Soviet Russian history following Marx and Lenin. He is fearless, ruthless, realistic, disinterested and genuinely concerned for his cause, as were Marx and Lenin before him.

A UNIFIED PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

Russia has achieved what has hitherto been known only to a small extent and at rare periods in history, the experience of almost a whole people living under a unified philosophy of life. All life is focused in a central purpose. It is directed to a single high end and energized by such powerful motivation that it seems to have supreme significance. It releases a flood of strenuous activity. The new philosophy has the advantage of seeming to be simple, clear, all-embracing and practical.

Some philosophies have existed as a dream in the mind of a

man or of an esoteric group, some have been discussed in academic groves or recorded in the archives of classic libraries. But this philosophy is being incarnated in the life of a nation covering nearly one-sixth of the earth. Never was any other system so swiftly and completely embodied in the life of mankind. Man individually and socially needs a philosophy or a working faith. If we take philosophy at its simplest as the attempt to understand the meaning of experience, it is evident that man must try to comprehend the significance of his own life. As he advances in experimentation and conscious reflection he may finally ask where he can find a cause or way of life that is rational, supreme, compelling, all-embracing and fit to centralize life. What are the real values in life, and can they be harmonized and integrated in a single purpose, embodied in a unified personality and achieved in society?

The modern world has lost such a philosophy. The World War destroyed the faith of the nineteenth century. It was a rude awakening to stark and sordid realities. Life was shattered, disintegrated, dissipated. Faith gave place to cynicism and hope to despair. Yet it was in just this period of shell-shock, disillusionment and pessimism after the war and in the post-war depression that a large section of mankind achieved again what had seemed forever impossible, a unified philosophy of life. It was a way worked out by Marx, and later applied by the son of a minor Russian nobleman, Lenin. Thus both Marx and Lenin belonged to the privileged class but completely identified themselves with the cause of labor and the poor. No philosophy ever played a more violent or dynamic part in history or so sharply divided our modern world. We will do well to try to understand it.

Marx gathered up all the vague revolt and desire of the oppressed toilers and gave them what appeared to be a clear philosophy, a program of action, and such a relationship to cosmic forces that it seemed that the very stars in their courses were fighting for them for certain victory.

This philosophy seemed to explain their past and to give

rational justification for their preordained future. Every great revolution has had some philosophy behind it, but no other ever had such an effective weapon. It unites the ultimates of philosophy with practical economics, applied science, dynamic sociology and social psychology, coupled with an almost religious emotion and future prophecy that has the appearance not of faith but of scientific certainty. The hope of a glorious future nerves the faithful for immediate social action. Preparation for a future life is replaced by sacrifice for a future generation. Their philosophy holds to a rational principle in the universe, an ethical progress in history, and a personal and social dynamic for almost impossible achievement in the transforming both of the material environment and of human nature.

As surely as Soviet Russia has become integrated, we of the West have witnessed a philosophic decadence and disintegration. Where feudalism once united the world, capitalism has divided it by the competitive anarchy of a loose individualism. Not organized society but the insecure individual is now the unit and every man is for himself. The economics of profit conflict with the aims of culture. The gain of the few is pitted against the welfare of the many. This whole laissez faire philosophy of life breeds competitive strife between individuals, classes, races and nations. It is rife with inner contradictions and conflicts and actually results in a succession of crises, depressions and wars, which have now almost inevitably become world wars.

Karl Marx, with all his inadequacies, shows why that order, filled as it is with inner contradiction and strife, is doomed, and why we are nearing the end of an epoch.

AN EVALUATION OF MARX

In the preceding statement of the teachings of Marx, in the effort to clarify and simplify for the beginner, there has undoubtedly been an oversimplification of his system, which itself oversimplifies the complexities of life. In our effort to evaluate the system we must not be led astray either by a mere

difference in vocabulary or by our own bias. We must recognize the initial prejudice with which many of us approach the system. Most of us belong to the economically privileged group or to the comfortable middle class dependent upon it. We little know and therefore care inadequately how the other half of humanity lives — the workers, the poor, the unemployed and the economically disinherited. We do not realize how our whole view of life is economically determined by our social environment and the views of the class to which we belong.

Broadly, the economic order is following the path which Marx predicted. After five thousand years, the heirs of those who built the pyramids beneath the whip, of the helots of Greece, the slaves of Rome, the serfs of the Middle Ages and the victims of the Industrial Revolution have been made class-conscious and believe that they also are destined for emancipation. But it must be remembered that five thousand years of the history of privileged classes have never given them their heritage. And after nineteen centuries the religion which claims to be the most social in its teachings has not even demanded, much less achieved, social justice for them.

Not many philosophers recognize the subjective coloring of their ideas. Marx himself, unconscious of wishful thinking, was able to find a system that contained all his desires and a universe that was cooperating with him. He imagined that he had discovered by strictly scientific processes the laws which made the ultimate victory of the proletariat practically demonstrable. There was in his system, however, a residue of quasi-religious faith which he did not recognize. His prophetic vision was a secularized version of the oft-repeated apocalyptic vision of a redeemed society for the disinherited classes. It was not wholly a scientific demonstration but partly an unrecognized religious hope. It was drawn from Hegel, and much of Hegel's thought was derived unconsciously from religion. As a result there is a great deal of religion and idealism in Marx and in Soviet Russia today, which passes unrecognized under a complete change of vocabulary and of ideas.

A world which starves in the midst of plenty, which enriches a few and pauperizes many in spite of overproduction, which divides and destroys mankind by greed and strife and war, needs the challenge both of realistic economics and of idealistic morals. To Marx and the prophets the two are one. If we have been deaf to the message of "Moses and the prophets" it is not strange that we resent the denunciation of Marx.

The demand of Marx for justice had been made by the prophets for centuries. Because it was still unheeded, he had to thunder forth the message anew. He did more, however, than repeat a verbal demand. He almost "turned the world upside down." According to the record of the ancient prophets their message was often unheeded by a stiff-necked people. Plato's idealistic dream hardly touched the earth. Sir Thomas More's Utopia was never established nor taken seriously. But Marx had thrown the whole world upon the defensive. He embodied his philosophy in organization during his lifetime and within a generation it was incorporated in nearly one-sixth of the earth. It is now disturbing the other five-sixths.

An absolute pacifist may consistently challenge Marx's program of violence. But the jingoist or the religionist who is ready to rush into war cannot fairly object to Marx's similar use of force. The World War left, of combatants and non-combatants, twenty-six million dead. The Marxist October revolution in Russia did not sacrifice even twenty-six hundred in the actual fighting of a revolution which was almost bloodless, until during the counter-revolution there was an attempt to kill Lenin and to restore the czarist order. Wherein was a war holy which slew in its Moloch sacrifice twenty-six millions, and a revolution for social justice and a new social order abhorrent which sacrificed less than twenty-six hundred lives?

Speaking for myself, I find Marx a stimulus and a challenge. He is dynamic, like a powerful reagent in the chemical laboratory. He affects me like the charge of dynamite in the blasting of an oil well. When, in boring, the oil-bearing strata are

reached and the oil begins to ooze up, to "shoot" the well, a charge of dynamite is often used to blast away all obstructions and release the full flow of oil. The dynamite does not create a single drop of oil, it merely releases its potential flow. Marx breaks up for me the encrusted strata of custom, tradition and prejudice in my own life and in our economic order with all its oppressive interests and classes.

Marx helps me in several ways:

1. He shows me the absolute necessity of social justice as an immediate, imperative, basic demand without which there can be no satisfying economic, social or spiritual order for man. He challenges the monstrosity of our whole unjust competitive system, with its inevitable tension and strife, which ever threatens to break into class war at home and world war abroad.

The majority of the human race is still in the condition of primary poverty, despite man's multiplied productive power, which has reached the state of "overproduction" so far as the criterion of profit and purchasing power is concerned. Capitalism stands revealed as based upon the exploitation of labor, employed and unemployed, just as were the systems of slavery and feudalism which preceded it.

2. Marx helps me to be a realist. I can accept the realism called for by Marx, that thought and action, theory and practice must be one. Theory cannot be verified in the armchair of the philosopher; it can be validated only in human history. Marx delivers me from a sentimental religious idealism which has habitually failed to come to grips with reality and which deludes itself by a mere personal acceptance or proclamation of a utopian ideal, although the realization is ever postponed, generation after generation and century after century. Until disturbed by Marx I had failed to call for a relentless reckoning to see whether we are indeed realizing our ideal or whether we are accepting some excuse or alibi, practically as an opiate.

3. Marx has opened my eyes to recognize the dominant importance of the economic factor as a determinant of the social forces, the ideas and institutions of an age. The role of ideas is

usually secondary to that of economic realities. While there is a diffusion of ownership in capitalism there is a growing concentration of the control of capital and the creation of classes of owners and dependents. Men think and act chiefly according to the self-interest of their class. Business men, for instance, have a prevailing similarity of outlook. The few exceptions only prove the rule. I have known but few ruthless men who seemed thoroughly bad, and I have known a few model employers, but they were quite impotent to change the system by their individual generosity. The vast majority of business men act according to their economic interests. While there is a wide divergence in their profession of ideals, I find little appreciable difference in action between those who profess religion and those who do not. Religion furnishes many of the ideas and ideals of those who profess it, but their economic interests dominate and determine action. Marx shows that we shall never change the system in time by seeking benevolent model employers, any more than the system of slavery was changed by benevolent owners. Most of the slaveowners were "good" men and kind to their slaves, just as most employers are good, but neither class ever radically changes the system. It is the economic *system* that is wrong. This affects our whole life today and, all unconsciously for most, poisons every human relationship.

4. I am helped in the interpretation of history and in reading the signs of the times by the dialectic process. Formal logic excluded the contradictory, while Hegelian logic reveals the universe fulfilling itself by a process of perpetual contradiction and conflict. Marx's conception of history could better have been called realist than materialist. His theory of unceasing progress toward a classless society should forever exclude dogmatism, though this principle of free progress is now being contradicted by the harsh, rigid fundamentalism of Moscow.

I confess that the dialectic process seasons me to a hardened optimism. Because of both the scientific work of Marx and Darwin and the religious faith of the prophets, I believe in a

better future. It was my former belief that the new order could be introduced painlessly by education, although it was a race between education and catastrophe. The realism of Marx opened my eyes to the fact that we are not at present winning that race. Nearly ten centuries of Anglo-Saxon higher education, nineteen centuries of the prevailing type of religion, and twenty-six centuries of the influence of the prophets have neither achieved nor even boldly demanded an order of economic justice. Slavery did not, feudalism did not, capitalism has not. We have not yet escaped from the last of these systems of exploitation. Writers, educators and ecclesiastics, as well as employers and workers, are almost all conditioned, paralyzed or blinded by the economic system of our day.

But the system is doomed. It will pass over into something better as the other two exploiting systems did before it. Whether, then, by education or by catastrophe or *by both*, as in all past history; whether by evolution or by revolution or *by both*, as heretofore — the new order will come. Though all periods of transition are fraught with suffering for multitudes, it is my unshaken conviction that a better day is coming. If progress is often, though not always, through conflict, if advance may come by both education and catastrophe, even though the former is infinitely better, then strikes and depressions, for instance, will not be meaningless. They will not discourage us if they are the inevitable growing pains of the social order. If the darkest hour must come before the dawn, still the new day dawns!

At several points I must part company with Marx and find myself in radical disagreement with him.

1. I do not believe that violent revolution is inevitable, nor do I believe that it is desirable in itself as some of the followers of Marx seem to make it. When once violence is adopted as a method in an inevitable and "continuing revolution," when to Marx's philosophy is added Lenin's false dictum that "great problems in the lives of nations are solved *only by force*," most

serious consequences follow wherever communism is installed under a dictatorship and a terror. This shuts the gates of mercy on mankind. In Soviet Russia most prosperous farmers were counted kulaks, and the kulak became the personal devil or scapegoat of the system, as did the Jew in nazi Germany. Intellectuals and engineers are all too easily accused of deliberate sabotage, of being "wreckers," class enemies, etc. When this philosophy — that great problems are solved only by violence — is applied, then trials, shootings and imprisonment follow in rapid succession. A purge soon gets out of the hand of the leaders in the Kremlin and becomes a forest fire. Hatred and violence mean wide destruction and incalculable human suffering. Already they are liquidating their third crop or class of enemies in Russia under a system that ever produces fresh enemies.

2. I cannot agree with Marx that the proletariat is the one and only messianic class, just as the Jews are not the only chosen people. Marx unconsciously drew more from Judaism than he realized. In more senses than one, the Jews in the crucible of vicarious suffering become a truly messianic race to humanity. Marx, instead of a chosen people, conceives of a chosen class — the suffering proletariat — which is to be the only deliverance for humanity. This class is supposed to have absolute and unique value and it alone is to bring in the classless society. Its judgments become final and adequate for all. Under a favorable environment human nature itself is to be changed so that a government of force will be no longer needed. The values of this class are so unique and absolute that it is supposed to be justified in destroying all who oppose it.

We admit that Marx's faith in the common man was not misplaced, that the workers have shown that they have enormous power and possibilities. Yet the middle class also has revealed possibilities which Marx did not foresee. The doctrine of a messianic class has caused and sought to justify great cruelty in Russia, yet it has not produced, nor is it in the way of producing, the classless or well-nigh perfect social order

which was vainly expected upon the false premise of its messianic character and the socialization of the means of production.

3. Two decades of experience in the Soviet Union now enable us to test Marxian theory by the Russian experiment. In general that experience tends to show that Marxism is essentially correct in its economic theory. It appears, however, to be partly wrong in its theory of the state, its estimate of human nature and its belief in the dialectic process as an iron law of necessity in the universe.

Marx held that the abolition of the private ownership of the means of production and their socialization would abolish the two conflicting owning and dependent classes and thus introduce an economically classless society where the state as the instrument of class domination would "wither away." While twenty years is too short a time properly to judge such a theory, apparently no such result is taking place as yet. I do not say that there will never be a classless society, but up to the present the tendency is toward a growing tyranny.

Thus far every society, whether capitalist or communist, has been ruled by an oligarchy. The capitalist ownership of property is irresponsible and self-perpetuating. But the rise of an oligarchy with a monopoly of political power in the Soviet Union seems to be due, not to the perfidy of Stalin, but to the nature of the state and of the human heart. Every class in office arrogates special powers to itself. Lord Acton's oft-quoted saying that "all power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely" seems to be equally true of bourgeois and of communist society. Marxism wrongly identifies human egoism with the capitalist structure of society. Marx's dream of a "free association of workers" turns out to be thus far in part a self-perpetuating tyranny.

Again, Marx was superficial in his view of human nature. According to him, the capitalist environment alone was wrong. He held that once ownership of the means of production is socialized in a healthy environment men will intuitively do

right. His followers were to use unlimited force and a terror during a temporary dictatorship, then there was to be a paradise of brotherhood once the bourgeoisie were eliminated. But nothing of the sort has taken place. Marxists held an eighteenth century faith in the perfectibility of man that did not take account of the depths of selfishness and sin in every human heart, not only bourgeois but proletarian, including Marx, Lenin, and Stalin themselves.

Regarding his dialectic, Marx was a great revolutionary prepared to right the wrongs of capitalist society. But unconsciously, by a process of wishful thinking, he read his own revolutionary purpose into the structure of the universe. He assumes unconsciously as a religious faith, without the necessity of proof, that the world is evolving of its own necessary motion by a dialectic procedure "from the lower to the higher." The mere development of the technique of production was to bring about the triumph of the proletariat over the capitalists and install a reign of justice "with iron necessity." But why should it do so if there is no God, no intelligence and benevolent purpose in the universe? Marx is here as elsewhere taking over part of his inherited religious faith—that is, a belief as to the nature of life and the universe that cannot be scientifically proved—and reading it into the law of the material universe. This is not science but religion. Instead of believing that they were trying out a hypothesis in their great Russian experiment, communists believed that they were co-operating with a process expressing the ultimate nature of the universe. That is just what we believe concerning history because of our faith in God. Communist action and faith are often better than their logic and may ultimately lead in the right direction. There is a great truth in the dialectic process of progress through conflict, but it cannot take the place of God.

4. Finally, we disagree fundamentally with Marx as to the nature of reality. It may be conceived as mechanical, as organic, or as superorganic. Mechanically conceived, the uni-

verse may be considered a heartless machine, and man an automaton of fate, all his actions like the cogs of a machine bound by a rigid determinism.

Or, second, reality may be conceived, with Hegel and Marx, as an organic process. As we have seen, Hegel conceives it idealistically as the self-realization of the idea in history. Marx, in his dialectical materialism, takes up the mechanical relationships into his wider organic interpretation.

But there is a third form of relationship that is superorganic, of which friendship would be a type. Such personal relationships are not merely mechanical or organic, they are not in the dialectic process of becoming something else. So long as life lasts they abide. Social life is not of the nature of the mechanics of the machine nor of a biological organism. It moves on a higher plane of reality and experience. Personal reality is superorganic.

We feel concerning Marx as Wordsworth did concerning the abstract materialism of the early nineteenth century, that *something had been left out*. Humanists, religionists, liberals and even many radicals of various schools of thought will not be appealed to by the drab monotony of the materialistic life of the economic man in Russia, which incarnates Marx's philosophy at this point. Even after long struggle, when material abundance has been gained, they will become more than ever aware that man cannot live by bread alone.

We must not allow ourselves to be alienated from Marx's passionate and prophetic demand for justice, which was the supreme human need of his day and of ours, by his violence or his dogmatic atheism. Sidney Hook well says: "Atheism is a negative theology. It has its rituals no less than the orthodox faith, its own dogmas and orthodoxies. But man has a religious need which cannot be satisfied by negations. To say that this does not exist or that does not exist is not enough. For, first we cannot logically prove that something does not exist. . . . Marx's sentence, 'Religion is the opium of the people,' has itself acted like opium upon the minds of his followers, who

have repeated it as if it constituted all that can be said on the subject. If religion were the opium of the people, the necessary precondition of all criticism would be the awakening of the people from their drugged slumbers. This is precisely the position which Marx criticized when he argued against B. Bauer, Stirner, Feuerbach and others that the political and social movement of the working class must not be explicitly or programmatically antireligious.”⁵

I have stated elsewhere the reasons which make impossible my acceptance of the system practiced in Soviet Russia under the dictatorship: its denial of political liberty, the violence and compulsion of a continuing revolution, and the dogmatic atheism and antireligious zeal required of every member of the Communist party.

In spite of these evils I believe that the two most important experiments being tried in the world today are the Russian experiment in justice and the Anglo-Saxon experiment in liberty. Each is one-sided and imperfect. Capitalism denies justice to great masses of the unemployed, to the poor and the dwellers in the slums. The soviet system still denies liberty and is driven to liquidate the successive enemies which the system itself produces.

As they are today, neither of these systems is good enough nor fit to survive. From the imperfect thesis and antithesis of these two unsatisfactory extremes there must in time arise a higher synthesis which shall unite justice and liberty, the rights of the many and of the one, social control and individual initiative.

We reach the conclusion, after a study of both its theory and practice, that while Marxism must be criticized and corrected at many points it is an essentially correct theory and analysis of the economic realities of modern society. It is correct in its analysis of the unavoidable conflict between owners and workers in an industrial economy. It is correct in regarding private ownership of the means of production as the basic cause of periodic crises and technological unemployment, and

correct in its insistence that the communal ownership of the productive process is a basic condition of social health in a technical age. If so, it is the key to the understanding of what is economically wrong with the modern world. And it shows the only way out in the building of a socialized planned economy. It is then not a truth for Marx and his followers, but for us all. It is, at this one point, the truth of God for man in this technical age. If it be merely of man it will come to nought and, like slavery, feudalism and capitalism, it will destroy itself. But if it be indeed the truth we may be found to be fighting against God if we resist it.

Marx himself did not desire a violent transition. It is for the Christian to find a better way out. That way is not the proclamation of loving cooperation on the part of all to perpetuate the capitalist system. That is not revolutionary but reactionary religion. It is all too common. If we follow a revolutionary Master who was a worker, who took his stand with the poor, it is for us, even more than for the Marxist, to seek here and now the *sine qua non* of a new socialized planned economy. It may be in our hands to determine whether the transition shall be by evolution or revolution.

NOTES

¹ The writer acknowledges here the use, with the permission of the publishers (Farrar and Rinehart, New York), of some material, which he has revised, from an earlier volume, *Russia Today* and from *The Meaning of Marx*.

² Marx says: "The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society—the real foundation on which rise legal and political superstructures and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual processes of life." (*Critique of Political Economy*, p. 11.)

³ Speech at Amsterdam, 1872, in *History of the First International*.

⁴ Marx says: "Then there will no longer be any political power, in the strict sense of the term, seeing that political power is the official expression of the conflicts within bourgeois society." Engels says: "In

one domain after another the intervention of a state authority in social relations becomes superfluous, and therefore spontaneously ceases to occur. The government of persons is replaced by the administration of things and by the management of the processes of production. The state is not abolished, it withers away." (Marx, *Misère de la Philosophie*, p. 243. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 103.)

⁵ Sidney Hook, *From Hegel to Marx*, pp. 154, 293.

VIII

THE PRESENT WORLD SITUATION

A REVOLUTIONARY EPOCH

TO THE Jew all history was sacred. Like the prophets we should be profoundly concerned with contemporary history. Many writers have pointed out what they believe to be cumulative evidence that we are approaching the end of an epoch, and are entering what may prove to be the greatest crisis in history. It may help us if we can see this crisis in perspective as only one of a series of great transitional epochs.

To Plato (*ca.* 428–348 B.C.), the death sentence pronounced on his beloved Socrates spelled the doom of Greek democracy, the finest flower of human civilization, which had taken centuries to reach its bloom. Dimly at least he could see in advance the fatal divisions and final fall of Greece. Yet with unshaken faith he founded the Academy, and in his *Republic* boldly grasped the vision of a new social order which later was to be partly realized in the great democracies of the world.

Jeremiah, in his tragic life, foretold and witnessed the Babylonian captivity and the end of the Jewish kingdom with the capture of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple of Solomon. Yet indomitably he predicted a new Covenant, written in the heart of man, in inward personal religion which no outward catastrophe could reach.

Standing at the climax of twenty centuries of Jewish history, Jesus, the deliverer of his people, finds himself rejected and condemned to crucifixion as a criminal instead of being received as the Messiah. He foresees the destruction of Jerusalem

and the dispersion of his people to the ends of the earth. Yet from first to last he proclaims an eternal spiritual Kingdom of God on earth and still calls us across the centuries to seek, to enter and to share in the triumph of that eternal Kingdom.

Augustine (A.D. 354-430) lived his life in the midst of tragedy, controversy and catastrophe. Yet as bishop in the little town of Hippo in North Africa, three years after the sack of Rome by Alaric in A.D. 410, he calmly began his twenty-two books of *The City of God*.¹ Even though Rome, or civilization as he knew it, should perish, he believed that the gates of hell should not prevail against the spiritual Kingdom which Christ had promised. He himself was one of the founders of a united Christendom which was to succeed pagan Rome.

Later, the fall of feudalism seemed to menace civilization. The insolent atheism of the masses, the slaughter of the Bourbon aristocracy and even of the earlier revolutionary leaders themselves in the destructive French Revolution, seemed to the cultured and religious people of that day completely to destroy all promise of the ideals of liberty. As there is a close parallel between the French and Russian revolutions, especially in the dark days of the purge in the latter, we may examine this movement a little more closely.

The reigns of the corrupt and degenerate Bourbons, like those of the later Romanoff czars, had ended in "monstrous and incurable luxury" and finally in economic and moral ruin. The philosophers only formulated the general discontent. Rousseau (1712-78) proclaimed the theory of the social contract and the sovereignty of the people, and laid the foundations for a revolution of liberty, as the far greater Marx (1818-83) did for a revolution of social justice a century later.

There was in France no one outstanding revolutionary philosopher equal to Marx, no single leader of genius like Lenin, and no follower like Stalin to carry through the program of the revolution to its completion. The Commune of Paris transformed Notre Dame cathedral into a temple of Reason and selected a painted opera girl to impersonate the goddess. All

the churches of Paris were closed. A score of leaders of the Commune itself were guillotined and Danton, who in some respects resembled Trotsky, was executed. Robespierre then instituted the terror to destroy all his enemies who were accused of treason. The revolutionary tribunal which had previously passed twelve hundred death sentences, now swept away the formalities of legal trial and executed fourteen hundred in the next six weeks. Carrier, finding the guillotine too slow, drowned his victims wholesale. The revolution proceeded to devour its own children. Robespierre, the dictator, was beheaded together with a hundred of his adherents.

In the purge of the Russian revolution during 1937 and 1938, according to the statements in some forty national, provincial and local Russian papers, the numbers shot totaled twenty-five hundred in a year and a half, but seventeen thousand were executed within an equal period of time in France. In the French Revolution a far greater and unknown number was massacred or disappeared forever. Hundreds of thousands were imprisoned, many of whom died in filthy jails, while a hundred and fifty thousand were on the list of émigrés, all of whom were liable to instant death if they returned to France. Once the thirst for blood was aroused, the carnage spread far beyond the nobility, the clergy and the bourgeoisie, even to peasants and artisans. It made havoc of the flower of the French nation. All parties were imbued with mutual hatred. Finally intervention and invasion united distracted France, whose armies, like those of Lenin and Trotsky, won sweeping victories on the battlefields through the passionate loyalty of peasants and workers to the ideals of the revolution.

The devouring terror finally led to violent reaction and to the dictatorship of the Corsican Bonaparte in a revolt against the revolution, similar to that under the fascist leaders Mussolini and Hitler. For ten long years France had to endure the horror of hunger and anarchy, and it took a whole century firmly to establish republican institutions and measurably to realize the ideals of liberty in an ordered and stable govern-

ment. It was no wonder that the democratic leaders of Britain and the monarchists of Europe were horrified and repelled by the excesses of the French Revolution. But Washington and Jefferson, whose own revolution had been inspired by the same sources as the French, saw beneath the temporary terror the imperishable ideals and the net gains for humanity in liberty. Revolutions, especially, must be judged in perspective; but they must also be appraised realistically in their vast work of destruction.

In the catastrophes that marked the downfall of Greek civilization, of the Jewish nation, of the Roman Empire, and of feudalism, men in each case faced a great crisis at the end of an epoch. It was difficult, if not impossible, for them to see that it was not only the end of an age but the beginning of a new and better one. Though each period of transition was one of violence and destruction, it meant both the doom of the old order and the dawn of a better day.

MODERN EUROPE

As we survey the present world situation we find the nations torn between the three conflicting political and economic systems of fascism, communism and democracy. It is not accidental that all the remaining free and liberal countries seek to combine economic capitalism and political democracy.

The fascist countries seek to maintain the framework of economic capitalism without the complete socialization of the means of production, under the guise of "national socialism." In place of political democracy they substitute the dictatorship of a personal leader and a totalitarian state. By the time of the tenth anniversary of his own march on Rome, Mussolini could boast that seventeen countries had already adopted his type of fascist dictatorship. Many more have since been added.

Soviet Russia alone has sought a complete economic, social and political revolution by socializing all means of production, all industry and wealth, all land and almost all agriculture. As

the fall of Bourbon feudalism and the adoption by France of the form of a free republic meant the beginning of a democratic world and the lingering death of all feudalism, so the adoption by one-sixth of the world of a socialist economy, however crude or cruel it may be in its transitional stages of purge or terror, means the beginning of a socialized, planned economy *for the world*. The world cannot live permanently half slave and half free, nor in separate, watertight compartments of capitalism, fascism and communism. However it must be modified, the system that is fittest will tend to survive and to spread.

Before analyzing and appraising these three orders, capitalism, fascism and communism, we must define our terms. By capitalism we mean the private ownership of the social means of production under a competitive system, not primarily for use but for the profit of the owners. By fascism we mean the state control of the means of production to preserve the forms of capitalism under the dictatorship of an individual leader or a totalitarian state. Fascism is the last stage of disintegrating capitalism, and the first stage of a national or state "socialism," with the suppression of all democratic organizations of the workers.

By socialism we mean the socialization of the means of production. The prevailing Anglo-Saxon variety commonly aims at the gradual socialization of the principal means of production by consent rather than by compulsion, by constitutional, parliamentary action, through constructive evolutionary processes rather than by sudden violent revolution.

By soviet communism we mean the state ownership and forcible socialization of all social means of production, distribution and exchange, under a dictatorship of the proletariat, with the complete liquidation of all possessing classes and of all opponents to the party, or section of the party, in power. Stalin and the leaders of the Soviet Union today of course do not claim that the present system in Russia is communism. It is rather violent or forcible socialism, of which they believe

that communism will one day be the completion. They hold that while ideal communism will mean, "From each according to his ability, *to each according to his need*," realistic socialism today means: "From each according to his ability, *to each according to his labor*" (in quantity and quality); ideal communism can exist only in a classless society where the state has "withered away."

Let us now make a brief survey of the working of fascism under the typical nazi dictatorship in Germany, of soviet communism in Russia, and of capitalist democracy especially in the United States.

NAZI GERMANY

We cannot evaluate nazi Germany without recalling the forces that produced it.² The Germans were a great people crushed and humiliated under the injustices of the Treaty of Versailles. They had been bled white by endless reparations; the middle class was bankrupt through inflation and labor was impoverished by the depression; the people were on the verge of bankruptcy, despair and revolution. This situation, for which the Allies and America were largely responsible, produced Hitler. We must admit that judged by results alone, the achievements of the German people under his leadership have been titanic. However illogical or contradictory it may have been, it was a stroke of genius to unite the two great motivations of patriotic nationalism and economic socialism. However great the discontent, in some respects Hitler has done more to unite the long divided German people than any leader in history. There is almost a renaissance in the ranks of German youth, as there is also among the youth of Italy and Russia, who all believe that they are building a new social order. All these achievements, however, must not blind us to the dangers and evils in the nazi movement.

Ideologically the whole fascist and nazi movement is built upon the philosophy of *the will to power*. We shall find that this in the end brings it into inevitable conflict with and con-

tradiction to the laws of God and of the universe. Its philosophy, in so far as it has one, is derived chiefly from Nietzsche and from Spann. These are the source of its theory of the superman and the superstate.

Professor Othmar Spann of Vienna,³ writing amid the wreck of the Austrian empire in 1919, traces the downfall of the old civilization to three phases of decay and degradation in liberalism, democracy and socialism. Under these three evils the state had been a relationship of persons which had resulted in rank individualism. According to Spann the new state must be absolutely anti-individualist and must crush out the old conception of personality. It must not be based on the rule of the people, of the herd, or on the sum of individual wills. Sovereignty must reside in the mystical general will. This can never be determined by democratic vote or the rule of the majority, but only by those who are purely disinterested, who apprehend and determine the moral law for all. An aristocracy and oligarchy of *optimi*, and ultimately, since no others are worthy, the single messianic consciousness of the leader, must know and declare the general will for all.

Human beings, no longer individual personalities of intrinsic worth and with natural rights, now exist for the sake of the collective community. The supreme virtue and ethical good is no longer love but absolute renunciation. This includes the renunciation of self and of all individual freedom. The individual has no liberty of conscience, no moral criterion of his own. The free individual is annihilated; the leader alone determines what is right or wrong.

Personality is no longer an infinite value in pursuit of which none may with impunity "offend one of these little ones." It is merely a means to the end of the collective state. Any number of obstructing individuals may be crushed or killed. The superman and superstate can do no wrong. They are beyond good and evil and the moral law. All of one mystic blood and race are now fused into one superstate which has absolute right against every "free" individual, against all other

mixed or "bastard" races, and against all claims of universal brotherhood.

Fascism is thus finally incompatible with autonomous Christianity. The individual who has renounced all must now obey, not God or his individual conscience, but this collective sovereign will to power. The leader as superman must exterminate or exclude all extraneous elements from this superstate, and is destined in the end to conquer the earth. When the writer was in Czechoslovakia during the recent crisis, the Sudeten Germans were marching to their song, as millions of militarized youth are marching in greater Germany today:

"Though we destroy everything,
Today we are the rulers of Germany,
Tomorrow we are rulers of the world."

Based upon this philosophy of the will to power, the superman and superstate, the nazi movement is founded upon five half-truths which, in another aspect, are dangerous falsehoods. These are the myth of a superior racialism, an exclusive nationalism that is against all healthy internationalism, an aggressive militarism, a megalomaniac imperialism, and an anti-Christian paganism. All these are unified in a conquering totalitarian state.

The ideals of the nazis are proclaimed officially by Hitler in his *Mein Kampf*,⁴ and by a score of nazi writers of the present time. In the seven hundred and eighty pages of the original unexpurgated edition of Hitler's book he shows that France must be first isolated and then "annihilated." With uncanny foresight he shows that to this end Germany must seek alliances with Italy and Great Britain. German Austria must be absorbed and all Germans, such as those in Czechoslovakia, must be included in the Reich. Within a century eighty million Germans must increase to a Reich with a population of two hundred and fifty millions. New soil for them must be won in Russia and the border states "only by the power of a victorious sword."⁵

Hitler writes: "We demand the union of all Germans, on the basis of the right of the self-determination of peoples, to form a greater Germany. National Socialism claims the fundamental right to force its principles upon the whole German nation, irrespective of earlier federative frontiers. . . . In the continuous and consistent uniform use of force alone lies the primary condition of success." This is all to lead to "the conquest of the world by Germans." Such a pure racial state "becomes one day lord of the earth."⁶

Hitler says: "I gradually began to hate the Jews. . . . I must act in the sense of the Almighty Creator. By fighting against the Jews I am doing the Lord's work."⁷

Hitler attacks the appearance of Christianity as "the first instance of spiritual terrorism" in the world. He bitterly assails Christian missions wherein "our churches sin against the image of the Lord." "The missionary will go on founding Negro missions . . . until our higher culture will have converted away out there healthy but primitive and low-down human beings into a putrid bastard breed." In other passages he pours contempt not only upon the Jew and the Negro but upon other inferior non-Nordic races. He especially despises the Slavs and Czechs. If all others are inferior, the superior Aryan Teutons have the right to unite, form a powerful state, alter the present map of Europe and impose their culture upon the world. Of far more fatal political importance than the idealistic philosophy of Plato is this realistic "philosophy" of Hitler incorporated in the nazi state of blood and iron. To whatever extent it may be true or false, here is a philosophy that is making history before our eyes.

Professor Frederick L. Schuman, in his *Nazi Dictatorship — A Study in Social Pathology*, shows that in 1933, after the nazis had themselves burned down the Reichstag, for which they had no further use, they crushed all their enemies within three months more completely than Mussolini had done in three years. The casualty list during the first nine months of 1933, according to Dr. Schuman, included sixty-seven executions,

some three thousand murdered, a hundred and nineteen thousand wounded, a hundred and seventy-four thousand imprisoned, and forty thousand thrown into the terrible concentration camps where so many leading Protestants and Catholics are still lying. These early atrocities were not so barbarous as the recent nation-wide pogrom and the hounding of the Jews out of central Europe.

Hitler says with regard to propaganda: "One acted on the very correct principle that the size of the lie is a definite factor in causing it to be believed. . . . The primary simplicity of the masses renders them a more easy prey to a big lie than a small one. . . . Something therefore always remains and sticks from the most impudent lies."⁸

All Hitler's contemporary proclamations and actions can be understood only in the light of this "nazi Bible," his autobiography. When he breaks solemn promises and takes Austria he may have torn up an interim scrap of paper, but he is true to his conscience, his creed and his clear declaration in *Mein Kampf*. When he tells Chamberlain and the credulous world that the Sudeten regions of Czechoslovakia are the last territorial change he will demand, has he renounced *Mein Kampf*? In which declaration is he telling the truth? Is this a big or a little lie that he hopes will "stick"?

Aurel Kolnai, in *The War Against the West*,⁹ devoted over seven hundred pages to quotations from more than a score of nazi writers who reiterate these principles and carry them to their logical conclusion in their attack upon liberty and democracy, upon Judaism and Christianity, and in their defense of the totalitarian state, the "sacrament of war" and the new paganism.

The principles and programs of Hitler and other nazi writers have been consistently incorporated in the very life of Germany. The dictatorship and the terror of Hitler were invoked against the Jews, against Catholics and Protestants who stand for freedom of conscience, against communists, social democrats, members of trade unions, pacifists, liberals in the univer-

sities, and other minorities, as well as all critics and "grumbler." The Jews were made the scapegoat for all Germany's ills, to take the place of a personal devil in the system.

On visiting Austria a few months after Hitler had seized it, our whole party of American educators was saddened at the barbarous treatment of the Jews. Forty thousand had fled from Vienna in three months. Jews were being robbed and evicted from their homes, their property and businesses were being confiscated, and they were subjected to every indignity and humiliation. To make cultured Jews put on their sacred phylacteries and clean lavatories or sidewalks with their bare hands was indicative of nazi sadism. The crowded anti-Semitic museum in Vienna, the flaming press and specially prepared lessons for infants are now indoctrinating both age and youth with hate.

Religious liberty will now be doomed in once tolerant Austria as it has been in Germany, as the dean of Chichester shows in his *Struggle for Religious Freedom in Germany*. Dr. Ley, leader of the Labor Front, makes the typical statement of faith: "I believe on this earth in Adolf Hitler alone. I believe in one Lord God who has sent Adolf Hitler to us." Baldur von Schirach, the leader of the whole German Youth Movement, also constantly identifies Hitler with God. Dr. Engelke, the German Christian, writes: "God has manifested himself not in Jesus Christ, but in Adolf Hitler." Pastor Niemöller and thousands of brave Christians have been thrown into prison or concentration camps because they feel they must obey God rather than man.

The nazi dictatorship has been intervening in Spain for the overthrow of the Spanish republic and the encirclement of France. It has taken Austria by force of arms, in violation of repeated solemn promises made by Hitler. It fomented insurrection in Sudeten Czechoslovakia, which, as the one democracy east of the Rhine, stood as the last barrier to Hitler's plan of the turning of central and eastern Europe, with a population of sixty-eight millions, into a profitable German colony. Ir-

resistibly armed, Germany seems to be marching on in fulfillment of Hitler's frankly announced program of Pan-Germanism in his *Mein Kampf* which he has never repudiated. However cynical, this is his one serious and honest declaration of purpose. In accordance with it he is working by plotting and violence in Poland, Rumania and Hungary; he is threatening Africa and South America, and menacing the whole world with war.

SOVIET COMMUNISM

On November 7, 1917, a small group of men around Lenin, followed by seething crowds of workers, peasants and soldiers in the street, seized the capital of czarist Russia, set up a soviet republic, and proceeded at once to build socialism. After twenty years this Russian workers' state, covering nearly a sixth of the earth, is stronger and more stable than it has ever been. Already the revolution has passed into its third phase. There was first the political and industrial revolution under Lenin, then the agricultural revolution under Stalin; now has come the third phase of the complete social revolution where the leaders have passed beyond the mere emphasis upon technical production and are seeking to reassert at any cost the original radical aims of the movement.

Beginning with nearly a decade of anarchy under the terror, and more than a decade and a half of reaction and fascist-like dictatorship under Napoleon, it took France, as we have seen, a whole century firmly to establish republican institutions. Twenty years after the storming of the Bastille, Napoleon was at the height of his power, and France had made little lasting advance toward the realization of the ideals for which multitudes of men had already died. We have no right to expect a finished and satisfactory state of things in the Soviet Union after two short decades, especially since it has attempted an immeasurably more difficult task than that of the bourgeois revolution in France. After centuries of failure to obtain redress of grievances by every other means there came the vol-

canic uprising of the Russian masses. But a revolution, however justifiably launched in violence, can neither solve its constructive problems by violence alone nor, on the other hand, can it easily abandon such methods. Violence brings its own nemesis. It creates such reaction that it almost never reaches the point where it dares to allow a democratic opposition to endanger its cherished ideals.

The basic principle on which the Russian revolution was launched was that of what we would call social justice. By the abolition of private ownership in the means of production, and of the consequent evils of monopolistic wealth and unrelieved poverty, the leaders sought to socialize or share not only all production but all life. Chiefly on this single, central issue this revolution must be judged. We must remember that revolutions are not conducted for the convenience of tourists, nor primarily for the approval of their class enemies or of refined liberals. Whatever the evils in the present stage of the Russian revolution — and we shall find there are many — it can hardly be denied that the main objective of socialization is being rapidly achieved.

The writer visited the Soviet Union twice in czarist days and twelve times under the present government. On his fourteenth visit in 1938, twenty years after the October revolution of 1917, he found the first great world experiment to establish a socialized planned economy on a vast scale. This workers' republic is titanically building socialism, rebuilding cities, changing the psychology of the backward peasants, and altering the very landscape of the steppes, or prairies, by collective farming.¹⁰

In little more than a decade they have made the masses literate. Over thirty-eight million are registered in their educational system, which provides free compulsory primary education. They are employing science to build a new social order in the first complete revolution ever attempted in history and in the first embodiment of a unified philosophy of life in a whole people.

Economically, Soviet Russia is slowly and painfully succeeding, though there is a lag in reaching the difficult goals of the five-year plans owing to the inexperience of the dull peasants in industry, to the inevitable waste of bureaucracy, to the diversion of over a quarter of the nation's energy to defensive armament, and to the loss of perhaps half their leaders by death, exile, or removal in the purge. After frequent visits to Russia for more than twenty-five years, the writer believes that the Russian people are on the whole distinctly better off economically and politically than in czarist days. They are slowly gaining in their standard of living; prices, though still far too high, are slowly falling, and real wages are increasing.

As we revisited Soviet Russia we were impressed again by its sheer mass and magnitude and the quality of its ideal aims. Here is the largest continuous country in the world, a vast subcontinent, four times as big as all the rest of Europe combined, or about twice the size of the United States. Here is the biggest country in the world, with vast undeveloped resources, with the largest and most rapidly increasing population in Europe, trying the boldest experiment in all history.

The clearly defined aim of its series of five-year plans is to build a socialist classless society and to make the country defensively impregnable. Under the completely socialized ownership of the means of production, by technical reconstruction the soviets seek to raise the standard of living of the toiling masses until they shall provide materially and culturally an abundant life for all. As yet, however, they are very far indeed from having attained this goal. It is as ridiculous to speak of the completion of socialism or the complete attainment of a classless society, as it is to write of "the end of socialism" in the Soviet Union.

The first thing that struck us as we entered Russia this year was the magnificent annual parade of sports and physical culture. We realized that 45 per cent, or some eighty million of this nation of youth, were born since the revolution twenty years ago, and these marchers represented some fifty million

youth and adults — students, workers, soldiers, and even peasants — who are getting some form of sport, athletics or physical education from one to three times a week.

Communists in the Soviet Union today are placing the chief emphasis, first, on the economic and political as basic; second, on the physical; third, on the intellectual, but only in so far as it is practical; fourth, on the ideological and philosophical, but only in so far as it is Marxian in furnishing a dynamic drive and reason for living; fifth, on the social and cultural, though their culture is as yet crude, materialistic and stereotyped; sixth, on the aesthetic. Their new civilization is weakest on the spiritual side.

One already sees some very real changes that show the advance marked by the adoption of the new soviet constitution. Although the dictatorship of the working class is preserved and the Communist party remains the only political party, the government has shown its determination to "democratize the constitution" in other respects. This is their third constitution within two decades, and there is ample provision for its continuous and progressive amendment. The proposed draft was discussed for five and a half months in over five hundred thousand meetings with a total attendance of over thirty-six million people. A number of changes were made and over forty amendments suggested democratically by the people were incorporated.

Every constitution contains provisions for political power, property and the protection of personality. In theory at least the ultimate power in this document is of, by and for the people. All who are eighteen years of age or over, have the right to vote by secret ballot; and a larger number actually do vote, and vote more often on matters that vitally concern them, than in any other country in the world.

According to the order of the Central Committee of the party the new direct elections by secret ballot "increase the masses' control over soviet organs and direct responsibility of these organs to the masses." For the first time in history

noncommunists are being invited to party meetings. The franchise is universal, "independent of race, creed, educational status, social origin, property status, or past activity." This restores the franchise even to priests and former kulaks. Recently fifty-five thousand, out of some two hundred thousand kulaks and others sent to prisons and labor camps for minor offenses, were given their liberty in appreciation of work done in the digging of the Moscow-Volga canal. The new constitution, like the old, copies again in quotation marks the words which communists assure us are originally from Karl Marx: "He who does not work, shall not eat."¹¹

Personality is protected, in theory at least, as never before, providing for "the inviolability of the person" which was demanded by the old Russian liberals in 1905. There seems to be a genuine democratic intent and goal here, and this is of great promise. But at present it can mean inviolability only for workers who are Stalinists and loyal to the party line, not, of course, for any opposition which is regarded as counter-revolutionary. It is of more importance at the moment, perhaps, that in the Soviet Union the people have the right to work, with payment according to its quantity and quality, the right to rest, social insurance, free medical help for toilers, the right to education, equal rights for women, and genuine economic liberty guaranteed and practiced under the constitution.

We have noted each year an advance and improvement along the entire economic and social front. We found a slow but steady economic advance in industry and agriculture, but very brilliant and rapid progress in some social matters, such as the reclamation of criminals, the steady abolition of prostitution, the multiplication of social services and of insurance, and provision for the aesthetic and cultural life of the masses.

The first thing that struck many of us this year was the improvement in the appearance of the people. They were better dressed, they held their heads up, they felt that the whole country is their own in the first workers' state the world has ever seen. There is an increasing look of general contentment

and well-being. Youth is happy and carefree, and their marching ranks filled every city we visited in the Soviet Union. The drive of nascent enthusiasm is still unabated, and some think it is even greater than it was twenty years ago.

The Park of Culture and Rest in Moscow had made visible strides in socialized — not commercialized — recreation; it was visited daily by nearly a hundred thousand happy people, and by three hundred thousand on special occasions; similar parks, on a modest scale, exist in distant towns and villages and even on collective farms. Some of the antireligious museums have been renamed as exhibitions of the history of religions and many offensive, blatant and ignorant features in them have been removed. The family and the home have received a fresh emphasis. Divorce has been made somewhat more difficult, and abortion is prohibited except where the health of the mother demands it.

After visiting Russia and interviewing people of all classes, we would estimate roughly that the following proportion of the population is loyal to Stalin and the present regime: about 99 per cent of the youth and of the Red Army, nine-tenths of the party and of industrial labor, about eight-tenths of the collective farmers and about two-thirds of the intellectuals, professors and engineers. This is a larger proportion than that which would support Hitler, Mussolini, Chamberlain, or Roosevelt. We are convinced that the Red Army has not lost in its fighting efficiency because of the purge.

But with equal emphasis we must maintain that there has been a grave party crisis of which the masses were not aware. There are still strain, tension and fear among party members and officials almost everywhere, especially in Moscow. The writer has watched these people weather five desperate situations during the past twenty years, and this present one is probably the least of them all.

The first crisis was during the period of military communism in 1918–20. The second was the strategic retreat of the new economic policy, following 1921. The third was the great

party struggle which came to a head in 1926-27. Stalin and the majority felt they had to maintain the party line, first against the left opposition, later against the right. The fourth crisis, following "the offensive against the villages," or war on the kulaks, resulted in the "difficulties" of the winter of 1932-33, which ordinary bourgeois mortals called a famine in the Ukraine. The fifth and last is the present party crisis of 1937 and 1938. Even if, during the past two years, many hundreds have been shot and many thousands have been imprisoned or exiled, this is as nothing compared to the first, second or third crisis mentioned above.

Under military communism Lenin and his followers, controlling only a small territory around Moscow, were fighting at one time literally on twelve fronts. They faced half a dozen White Russian armies led by Deniken, Kolchak, Yudenitch, etc., and the armed expeditions of fourteen foreign nations, including Britain and America. Industrial production had fallen to only 15 per cent of the czarist maximum. The nation was hungry and several million perished of actual famine. Yet the Soviet Union survived, defeated every White army and drove every foreign enemy from their shores, or forced them to withdraw. Industrial production is now seven times as great as before the war and it is still increasing faster than in any other country in the world. In a country where a few years ago there was not a single tractor or combine-harvester factory, the production of agricultural machinery has passed even that of the United States and now leads the world.

It is inevitable, however, that any true friend of Russia should be saddened by the evils which persist there after more than two decades. Presumably the Russians have almost finished liquidating the third crop of enemies produced by the revolution. First came the bourgeoisie, then the kulaks, now it is the Trotskyite "wreckers and enemies of the people." Those in the thick of the fight do not yet see why there are so many enemies and so many who are guilty of treason. They do not yet realize that it is tyranny that produces such treason. Until

the soviets grant the liberty of an open, honest opposition they will continue to create fresh enemies. They are still the victims of the evils of their system as we are of ours.

From our point of view there are three evils in the soviet system that make it morally impossible for us. As was to be expected in a revolution which would make real liberty possible only at long last, when a truly classless society should have been achieved, denial or severe abridgment of political and civil liberties still exists. Where there are so many spies practically all foreigners are suspect. But it is the Russians who fare worst. Almost no one is allowed to leave the country. Under a terror and a powerful secret police, multitudes become suspect.

The second gigantic evil is the violence of the "continuing revolution." In the minds of all pacifists and of the cultured liberals who do not understand it, the Russian revolution has been widely discredited by the purge. Revolutions are usually almost bloodless in the first stage of the seizure of power. When the counter-revolution begins, then the revolutionaries feel they must impose the terror. In accordance with the teaching of Marx, this was insisted upon by Lenin even more than by Stalin. Every consistent Marxian Leninist must approve of such purges. The writer has known even victims of the terror who were unjustly sentenced, who yet believed in its absolute necessity — men like Nuorteva who, after his release from prison, paid up his party dues, worked loyally and uncomplainingly with the party and finally became president of the Karelian Republic.

Finally there is the harsh dogmatic atheism practically required of all members of the Communist party, which has now officially taken up the task of liquidating what is left of religion in Russia. The atheism of the French Revolution was the unofficial, temporary attitude of a minority. Rousseau, Voltaire and Robespierre were theists, not atheists; whereas Marx, Lenin and Stalin were all convinced and consistent atheists. The religion they had known under the Hohenzollerns and the

Romanoff czars convinced them that religion was not only a superstition, an opiate, a false hope, but a powerful antisocial force always and everywhere allied to the possessing classes.

Marx declared in 1844: "The criticism of religion is the beginning of all criticism. . . . Religion is the people's opium. The removal of religion as the illusory happiness of the people is the demand for its real happiness." Lenin concluded that "all contemporary religions and churches, all and every kind of religious organizations, Marxism has always viewed as organs of bourgeois reaction, serving as a defense of exploitation and doping the working classes." Stalin consistently follows the same line: "The party cannot be neutral in regard to religion — Communists who hinder the broadest development of anti-religious propaganda have no place in the ranks of the party." Quite logically, therefore, Bukharin concluded: "Religion and communism are incompatible both theoretically and practically." Believing that religion is the bulwark of economic slavery, Bolshevism is finally and necessarily hostile to present-day bourgeois religion.¹² However false they may be in some aspects, and however they may repudiate the term religion, communism and fascism are both themselves to a large degree religions. That is one reason why they cannot tolerate Christianity, or each other. Men and movements know their own enemies. Organized religion, as Marx and Lenin knew it, had been a powerful antisocial force. It was therefore anathema.

Yarowslavsky, head of the Union of Militant Atheists, now claims that two-thirds of the population in the cities of Russia, and one-third of the people in the country, have broken away from the church, though not necessarily from personal religion. That would imply that a majority of the older generation in Russia are still believers. He says that there are still thirty thousand registered religious societies (churches, synagogues and mosques) having a minimum membership of twenty each. Each year we attend services in Russia in churches which have never been closed.

Despite these glaring, fundamental evils we believe that the

great experiment in Russia has lost none of its significance as the world's first complete revolution based on the principle of social justice. Here is the first country in the world that has ever dared to socialize, or share, all means of production, and has succeeded in ending the capitalist cycle of depressions and doing away with unemployment. While every capitalist country suffered from severe decline during the long years of the world depression, Russia alone steadily advanced each year. Every achievement and all economic life is consistently socialized. The Soviet Union has socialized industrial and agricultural production approximately 98 per cent, all land, all wealth, all banks and insurance, nearly all trade, all education, all recreation, and all medicine, a sphere in which it is making a world's record.

Whereas pre-war Russia was fifth in the world in total industrial output, soviet industry now occupies second place. In industrial production it is 700 per cent, and in the generation of electric power 1,700 per cent above the czarist maximum. During this depression it has constructed the marble subways of Moscow, reconstructed industry, rebuilt some of its cities, and broken a world's record in digging the eighty-mile Moscow-Volga canal in four years, thus joining the now unified river system for the republic of Russia and making Moscow an open port connected with five seas.

Here is the first country in the world that ever sought to give approximately equal justice to all workers, to all the masses and the poor. It is seriously seeking to end forever not only unemployment, but poverty, slums and injustice. And here is the first country that has seriously sought to build immediately a classless society where there shall be neither rich nor poor, neither white nor black, neither Jew nor Gentile, neither race nor color prejudice. The Russians do not, of course, claim to have as yet fulfilled this ideal, but there is less race and color prejudice in the Soviet Union than in any country in the world. There is less inequality in the distribution of wealth and income and no evidence of economic classes of the possessing and dis-

possessed. Whatever evils remain, these are gigantic achievements.

Frankly, we would have expected some Christian country to have attempted such an experiment during the nineteen centuries of the Christian era, or some followers of the Jewish prophets during the twenty-six centuries that have elapsed since the earliest of them made their demand for justice. Why did we never do so? Why will we never do so? Is it because our social order is basically economic and capitalist and not primarily political or religious? Is our religion so bound up with the economic order that it is incapable of working out adequate reform or of voluntarily providing justice based on Christian principles? What opinion we hold of the soviet experiment is not essential, but it is imperative that we learn our lesson for our own country from the signs of the times in our own day. Ultimately the question of social justice in Russia and the world is not an economic and political matter, but one that involves a moral and religious judgment. And in judging it, as in the case of Pilate, we pass judgment upon ourselves.

“ Still, as of old,
Man by himself is priced.
For thirty pieces Judas sold
Himself, not Christ.”

Respectable Christians are shocked at the crudeness, the cruelty and atheism of the Soviet Union, just as they were in the French Revolution. So were the Pharisees righteously shocked by publicans, harlots and common people “ who knew not the Law but were accursed.” But Jesus saw the heart of them all, as we believe God does today in Russia. Nominal Christians are like the son in the parable who said glibly, “ I go, sir,” and went not. Communists are like the son who in word refused to go but actually did the will of the father. And who bears a cross today — comfortable cultured Christians or sacrificial, persecuted communists? The latter may well ask,

as did the persecuted Christians in the Epistle to Diognetus, "Why does the world hate us?" Both were hated for the same reason. In both cases a moral judgment is involved. Anyone who takes the part of Russia, of the women and children in suffering Spain, of the poor or the laboring classes in capitalist countries, is called "red." And this epithet is not unjust. He is as red as the blood of a common humanity, as red as the blood of the criminal cross of his revolutionary Master. It is the rest of us that belong to the class that is "white."

To say that there is no difference between the totalitarian states of Russia and Germany because both use force and both have a purge is to be politically illiterate. The two systems are temporarily alike in this one respect in their use of means. They are poles apart in the all-important ends they seek. Of the four basic needs of man and the four elements in a Kingdom or social order of righteousness — justice, liberty, abundance and world brotherhood — Soviet Russia certainly seeks justice, an economy of abundance and an ultimate classless fellowship. They believe, however, that liberty must be postponed until the classless society is attained. The nazi system on the other hand can seek no one of these four essentials as a universal end, but only its own will to power for one special race and blood. Nazism is not only the world's chief menace of war, it is the world's chief denial of humanity. To be forced to live in such a world as the nazis are making brings a sense of impotent shame to one as a human being. They are the bar sinister on the shield of mankind. To change the simile, the nazi menace is like an attack of poison gas upon defenseless humanity. The truly great people of Germany are today dominated and terrorized by a gang of robbers and murderers.

AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

Having briefly surveyed two typical examples of fascism and communism in the world today, let us with equal frankness turn toward America as the center and seat of economic

capitalism and the world's first and oldest democratic republic. Much of what we say of America will apply to all Anglo-Saxon capitalist countries. However much a commonplace it may be, Americans must remind themselves that in many respects the United States is the most favored country on earth, rich in unparalleled resources. From a material standpoint America is the safest, richest, strongest nation on earth. Americans fail to realize the significance and responsibility implied in the statistics: while possessing only 6 per cent of the land area and 7 per cent of the population of the globe, they have, nevertheless, approximately 45 per cent of the world's wealth and the greater part of the world's gold supply. Of the world's total output the United States produces some 76 per cent of the automobiles,¹³ 60 per cent of the petroleum, 58 per cent of the corn, 56 per cent of the cotton, 48 per cent of the copper, 47 per cent of the steel, 43 per cent of the pig iron, and 33 per cent of the coal. Our country has 58 per cent of the telephones of the world, over half the machines of industry, 44 per cent of the radios, 36 per cent of the developed water power, 32 per cent of the railway mileage, and by far the largest capital wealth in the world. The hundred and thirty million people of the United States have as much, or almost as much, as the remaining two billion people of the world combined. To be the richest individual or nation in all history has serious implications of responsibility and of danger.

But how have Americans utilized and how justly have they distributed the income of this fabulous inheritance? Under an unplanned, laissez faire system they have permitted the amassing of vast fortunes based on special privilege, franchises and public utilities, the control of the nation's natural resources, appropriation of unearned increment resulting from the rise of land values, stock gambling, monopolistic banking, credit and profiteering at the expense of the exploited masses.¹⁴

Side by side with this monopolistic wealth we have stark, almost unrelieved poverty. President Roosevelt has spoken repeatedly of the third of the nation that is ill-fed, ill-clad and

ill-housed. The findings of the conservative Brookings Institution indicate that there may be even more than a third that are poor.

According to the official returns in 1929, the last normal year, thirty-six thousand families received nearly \$10,000,000,-000 of the nation's income, an amount which was about equal to the income of the twelve million families of the poor. That is, one-tenth of one per cent of the population of the United States received as much as 42 per cent of the people on the lower income levels.

During the first eight years of the post-war capitalist depression, while the Soviet Union with less resources had no unemployed, the United States had over ten millions always unemployed, six millions working only part time, and five million youths between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four, graduated from colleges and high schools, for whom no work could be found. The latter were not technically unemployed because they had never had jobs, but they are still in grave social and moral peril because an unplanned social order has no honest work to give them. Over ten millions a year have been living on some form of government relief. Such aid, if long continued, becomes dangerous for the character of many of them. The chronically unemployed may finally become unemployable. A vast majority of the youth of the Soviet Union are enthusiastic supporters of their system because they believe they are building a new and just social order for the world. Their system can offer creative work to every boy and girl, to every man and woman in their great republic. Can disintegrating capitalism, apart from the making of munitions, even give jobs to all its youth, or make them believe that such a system of organized injustice can possibly build a new world?

Typical of the injustice of the system is the recently issued report of the National Emergency Council, prepared for President Roosevelt, concerning the resources and conditions among the thirty-six million persons in the thirteen southern states. The report shows that, in a section of the country rich in soil,

petroleum, coal and other resources, there are vast areas of congested poverty where *the average tenant family receives only \$73 per person for a year's work and sharecroppers from \$38 to \$87 per person a year, or little more than ten cents a day!* This is coming perilously close to the poverty of India or China and is far below the standards of backward Russia and the masses of peasants in Europe. It is criminally inexcusable in the richest country in the world. The report shows that such poverty means debilitating slums, rural and urban, disease, a high death rate, illiteracy, and general demoralization.¹⁵

Added to the economic is the race problem which is so acute among all Anglo-Saxon and Teutonic peoples, especially in America where most of the twelve million segregated Negroes are shamefully exploited. Lynching is the symptom and symbol of this disease, yet the majority will permit no adequate federal or state legislation to punish lynchers or end this national disgrace. One still awaits an awakening of the national conscience and the moral condemnation by public opinion of lynching and economic racial injustice in the states where the two races exist together.

In America even the race problem is overshadowed in gravity by the labor problem. The test of the labor problem and the measure of its solution in every civilized country is the recognition of the principle of collective bargaining, i.e., legal provision for labor's right to the organization of national labor unions where they can be represented by leaders of their own choosing. That right is recognized in every democratic country in Europe. It is denied only in the backward fascist or feudal or in the rampant capitalist areas of the world. Yet, despite the fact of the legal recognition of this right under the Wagner Act, it is still denied by powerful employers in the United States, just as it is by Hitler and Mussolini.

We all know more of the control of the press in fascist and communist countries than we do of its capitalist control in America. Incidents like the following are never reported in the capitalist press. A personal friend of the writer, a former

Y. M. C. A. secretary, has been serving as an educational secretary for organized labor in Detroit. He dropped in recently, with a dozen other friends, at the home of a local labor leader. Suddenly two private gunmen, one known to be from the staff of the automobile manufacturer who boasts the highest wages in the world but denies labor's right to organize in his plants, appeared, drew their guns and lined up all the men against the wall. They had, apparently, hoped to find the labor leader alone and either to kill or cripple him.

One of the two gunmen immediately began to beat up this labor leader, but one of the visitors ran to the window and jumped from the third story to the ground below. When he gave the alarm the two gunmen escaped but were later arrested. It should have been simple to have these men imprisoned for five or ten years. But what good would it do? That would not affect the great employer nor his army of other gunmen and industrial spies who are prepared to terrorize and resist all efforts to organize on the part of his employees by the use of violence. This great employer once prided himself on employing former criminals, as he did on his praiseworthy if somewhat impractical efforts on behalf of peace. But now many of these former criminals are easily armed and useful to crush organized labor. A leading Christian worker in his city, who has reason to know, states that the efficiency and ruthlessness of his force of spies is second to none in the world.¹⁶

It must not be supposed that this incident in Detroit is an isolated happening. The Chrysler Corporation has a far better record in its treatment of labor than the employer referred to above, yet in the hearings before the La Follette Committee of the Senate this corporation admitted paying \$839,764 to twenty-one detective agencies for industrial spies. The total spy bill in the United States for some seven hundred strike-breaking and spy agencies has been calculated by authorities at over \$80,000,000 a year. The Black Hundreds of czarist Russia were perhaps more brutal but they never dreamed of such efficiency.

In Europe this summer the writer met some of the members of Roosevelt's commission of nine sent to study employer-labor relations in Europe. He was disturbed to hear one of the most distinguished of them express the belief that certain hard-boiled American employers, including the one in Detroit, are trying deliberately to incite labor to violence, in order to shock and estrange the middle class from labor and to defeat President Roosevelt in the next election. The American commission learned from British employers that they had for a long time universally admitted this right of collective bargaining and worked loyally and happily with the trade unions, with the exception of four American-controlled firms. A similar situation was found in Sweden where the right of collective bargaining has long been universally recognized by the Swedes themselves, but not by certain American firms there.

What is the significance of all this? In Great Britain the members of the ruling class in their own interests are themselves leading the way to, or are being forced toward, a socialized, planned economy. They have adopted a housing program to destroy all slums within a decade. They have one of the wisest systems of social insurance, insuring over fifteen million workers against unemployment alone. They admit and practice the principle of collective bargaining. They pay the Parliamentary leader of "his majesty's loyal opposition," the leader of the Labor party, a salary of \$10,000 a year to oppose them. They recognize that already one-quarter of all the industries, public utilities and services of Great Britain are no longer organized for private profit, but are either nationalized, municipalized, socialized or cooperative. They have taxed themselves far more heavily than Mr. Roosevelt has even dreamed of attempting in America. All of this is confessedly first of all in their own interests as well as for the welfare of the people as a whole. The result is that compared to America, Great Britain is steadily progressing toward a socialized, planned economy, which she may achieve without the necessity of a violent revolution if war is averted. The same is probable

in all the Scandinavian countries, in Belgium, Holland, Switzerland and several other democracies in Europe.

But what of America? The successful denial of even the primitive right of collective bargaining and the use of violence by ruthless employers may be a symptom of labor troubles, strikes and a violent transition in the United States. To put it quite bluntly, capitalist America is still to a large extent following the path of the Bourbons and Romanoffs before the French and Russian revolutions, and this policy, if pursued, will mean a revolution of violence in America. If this occurs it will not merely be the few ruthless employers who are responsible, but the large middle class consisting chiefly of professing Christians.

Another disturbing symptom is the way the propertied class has taken Roosevelt's reforms. The writer has never been a Roosevelt man, but he must say frankly that he has been amazed at the persistence with which the President, as no other in American history, has courageously followed his determination to relieve the neediest third of the nation that are the by-products and dregs of the capitalist system. With his many faults and mistakes he has probably done nearly all that any one man could do to save the capitalist system and to make the inevitable transition to a socialized order a nonviolent one.

But with what result? The writer has been startled at the number of Christian people, whether of the rich class or of the middle class dependent upon them, who have quite casually suggested the assassination of the President as legitimate. They were probably quite unaware that this policy was sternly condemned by Karl Marx as futile, but advocated by the anarchist Bakunin in the assassination of the czars. It is the maturing conviction of the writer that the prospects in America are not favorable for a peaceful transition to a socialized planned economy as in some other democracies. If there is ever a revolution in America the probabilities are that it will be far more violent than that of the casual, easygoing Slavs of Russia. But Americans will probably be as blind to this danger as were the Bour-

bons, the Romanoffs, or the Christians of France or Russia before the deluge. If by any chance the writer should be correct, we would do well to heed even now the evils both of fascism and of communism — of fascism, because that is far more probable as the next stage in the Anglo-Saxon countries than communism. In the last resort fascism may prove to be the only possible means of preserving the capitalist system.

And we should study Russian communism because there is a danger that America, in her unconscious refusal either to face or to solve her own crucial problems, is already drifting toward the extremes of violent revolution. Violent revolutions are almost inevitable in a nation and in a world that persistently and blindly evade their economic problems. But apart from violence and crime, which are the by-products of the more rampant unmodified capitalism of America, in most other respects capitalism is essentially the same all over the world. It is, always and inevitably, essentially unjust as between rich and poor, owners and owned.

Most Anglo-Saxons are probably accustomed to calling our system democracy rather than capitalism. It is almost impossible to judge the system objectively, because it is like the atmosphere we breathe; it has become a part of us and we of it. It is itself our standard of reference, our basis of judgment, our means of livelihood. We do not realize that capitalism colors and conditions our whole civilization. Through no necessary fault of the individual owners, many of whom are among the best people there are, our economic system affects everybody and everything — employers, employed, unemployed, the whole culture and civilization sustained by the capitalist economy, including science, art, education, government and business. It controls for its profit the housing of the poor and the ownership of the slums. It pays the bills and dominates, whether consciously or unconsciously, not only business and banking, but the dependent professions, the law, unsocialized medicine and, to a larger extent than is realized, even the ministry of the church. That control is the more effective in that

it is not obtrusive or even conscious. Capitalism controls the press, the amusements and recreation of the people. It is the source of the vast parasitic growth of crime and racketeering in America. It is the prolific cause of perennial war because it is in itself a war system, a system of incipient class war and threatened international war. It is the only system most of us have ever known. It is what we have and what we are. It is our world.

It is not surprising that this system of capitalism which is so uneconomic and so unjust is failing, and failing not only in America but all over the world. We cannot find an alibi or a scapegoat in Mr. Roosevelt or anyone else.

At the close of President Hoover's regime all the banks had to be closed to forestall the admission that many of them were bankrupt. Mr. Hoover set up the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. He had had forty months during which he ineffectually tried to grapple with reconstruction. His "Committee on Waste," when he was secretary of commerce, showed that the waste of capitalism in various trades and industries ran from 28 to 63 per cent.

While tackling the depression Mr. Roosevelt has already borrowed and spent over \$18,000,000,000 on the New Deal. As this brought increased production, our national income rose from \$40,000,000,000 to approximately \$70,000,000,000. Whereas our national debt was less than \$1,000,000,000 in 1913, it is now close to \$40,000,000,000. Of the lavish New Deal spending almost any impartial person would have to admit that possibly half or more of it has been waste. Even this waste, however, was better than chaos or revolution. We began to recover from the depression solely by the use of government credit. The business of America has been maintained in the depression by government subsidy. The debt is not so serious if it is remembered that the total interest on it amounts to less than one per cent of our national income.

When we tried to stop spending a couple of years ago, we went into a tailspin, the fastest drop in business in our entire

history. If we should elect a reactionary president in 1940 he would have to go on spending or seek the power of a fascist dictatorship on an American model. The astute Huey Long said: "It will be easy to bring fascism in America. All you have to say is that you are preventing fascism." Our society is already in the midst of a latent war between our partially democratic system of government and our autocratic economic system. The name of this chronic competitive system is capitalism, but its beneficiaries prefer the more euphonious title of the American system of rugged individualism. Our indictment is not against individuals nor a class but always against the system itself.

Many of the vast army of workers on relief in America have been made into "chiselers and grafters" through no fault of their own. Our farm problem has not yet been solved in spite of some \$3,000,000,000 spent on various agricultural subsidies. Some 2 per cent of our people possess over 60 per cent of our wealth and capitalism has almost completely failed in distribution. The directors of American big business often own less than 5 per cent of the stock they control, and some two thousand of these men dominate the key industries, the banks, railroads, telegraphs, telephones, iron, steel, coal, oil, power and machinery of the nation. The money transfusions, like shots in the arm, in the enormous sums that have been spent have not percolated down sufficiently to increase the purchasing power of labor to end the depression. In 1935, with a large percentage of business failures, 4 per cent of the companies got 84 per cent of the profits, and our vast government expenditures were not economically or justly distributed. Our capitalist banking system seems to have been designed to make the rich richer and the poor poorer. There are now \$47,000,000,000 of the people's money lying in bank vaults which they cannot economically invest; so our system results in both idle men and idle money. How long can such a system endure?

The National Resources Committee appointed by the government, after investigating three hundred thousand families in

thirty states, showed that our national income of \$60,000,000,-000 had to be divided among forty-one million family units and individuals. Of these, 32 per cent had incomes under \$750, 47 per cent under \$1,000, 69 per cent under \$1,500. Under our boasted American system of rugged individualism, one-fifth or more of our people are on relief, existing upon demoralizing public charity. Another two-fifths cannot get the essentials of decent living; while for the remaining two-fifths competition constantly becomes more ruthless and life more confusing. The whole system is too complicated to be left longer to blind chance, lest we drift into the great catastrophe of planless barbarism or anarchy. Our present course may bring us to real inflation. Too much profit is going into the great monopolies like the ALCOA aluminum monopoly, which paid dividends of 1,000 per cent on the original investment in a single year, and too little purchasing power goes to honest labor.

Thus the Mellons and Duponts become billionaires through monopoly, while impoverished men are driven to crime or sedition and dispossessed, have-not nations and dictators take to undeclared wars. War brings at first a temporary boom, but in the end it destroys goods and workers and leads to final impoverishment or revolution. War is thus the logical climax and end of the capitalist system. It is not primarily because of individuals like Hitler or Mussolini, nor because of Chamberlain or Hoover or Roosevelt, but because of our capitalist *system* that we are now drifting toward the abyss of world war. When it comes we may seek a scapegoat and a slogan and cry "Hang Hitler!" as we once cried "Hang the Kaiser!" in order to divert the attention of the masses from the real cause and to perpetuate our doomed system by imperialism or fascism. Then — the deluge!

Spending no more than we are now spending on uneconomic relief, we could produce more and cheaper power, steel, oil, coal and ores; we could give jobs to our unemployed and increase the purchasing power of labor. Just as we have *one* postoffice for use, and *one* telephone system (which is unfor-

tunately run for private profit) we could have for the public benefit one power system, one railroad, one steel and one oil industry publicly owned and operated. But some paid propagandist would then cry "Socialism!"

The capitalist democracies of Britain, France and the United States stagger under a colossal burden of debt which consumes a fixed charge of about a third of all that we make for capitalist profit, interest and rent before labor can be paid. A third of our labor force is already superfluous under unplanned capitalism. The technocrats and engineers have shown that if we effectively used our marvelous equipment for an economy of abundance and not for one of scarcity, working a few hours a day would yield every family \$5,000 a year under a socialized, planned economy. Instead we pour an alarming proportion of our national income into the coffers of the monopolists, the bankers and multimillionaires, leaving over ten million unemployed and millions on demoralizing relief. This last depression is ominous with menace. We should not be terrorized by terms such as "socialized, planned economy." The awful epithets "Republican" or "Democrat" a century or so ago could throw a man into prison or dungeon without a warrant for his arrest.¹⁷

It is this system of capitalism that is now slowly breaking down all over the world. It is disintegrating through its inner contradictions, through recurring crises and world depressions of growing intensity,¹⁸ through failure in distribution, and now through failure in even organizing production so as to provide work for the millions. Injustice is inevitable in a property system which gives to a few possession and control of the social processes by which society is clothed, housed and fed, while the workers who produce the goods do not receive enough in purchasing power to buy the equivalent of the goods they make. The whole system depends on profit, profit depends on price, price depends on scarcity; therefore the capitalist system must artificially seek to maintain an economy of scarcity, while our whole technical system is capable of an economy of

abundance. No individual plan of an industry or a trust, no class or race plan of capitalists or fascists, can much longer take the place of a socialized planned economy for all. No artificial man-made laws of special privilege can forever thwart the laws of God and of the ultimate community of humanity. Men in multitudes have struck their tents and are on the march. There is nothing so powerful as an idea whose time has come. It is ours to find what God is doing in our generation and fall in line with his mighty purpose.

THE NEW ALIGNMENT IN EUROPE

There is now a new alignment of the world powers since the epoch-making speech of Hitler demanding the Sudeten territory and the action of Chamberlain at the Four-Power Conference at Munich. Whatever Chamberlain intended, his action resulted in a weakening and a betrayal of the democracies and a strengthening of the fascist Berlin-Rome-Tokyo bloc.

Chamberlain, the German people and all the world wanted peace. No one wanted war unless he was a neurotic madman. The German general staff had refused to fight if Britain and all the strong and rich nations were on the other side, as in the last war. There need not have been a war to stop the fascist advance. When the writer was in Czechoslovakia during the crisis it seemed the brightest spot in Europe. Today it is almost the darkest. The issue was not the releasing of a Sudeten German population among whom discontent had been violently fomented by false propaganda. Until dominated by Hitler, Henlein had not believed the nazi program was "transferable" to the Sudetens, and had bluntly disclaimed all interest in "any kind of frontier revision." But once aroused and embittered, these hostile Germans were used as a disruptive force. Czechoslovakia was not an upstart republic manufactured in Versailles. Bohemia was one of the most ancient national states in Europe. Its old historic frontier, which had existed for over a thousand years, was one of the strongest natural frontiers in the world.

In recovering it the Czechs had regained their lost liberties and independence after three centuries of despotism.

While this four-power tentative agreement probably postponed world war, it doubtless made it more inevitable and upon terms more favorable to the fascist nations and more unfavorable to the democracies. The wavering, weaker nations such as Poland and Rumania, and even despoiled Czechoslovakia, have now been driven into the orbit of Germany. Britain and France, in retreat, will be growingly isolated in the west, while Russia will stand alone in the east. It will be a shattered world now preparing for war with a new and more dangerous alignment. If proof of this is desired, it will be found in the fact that, instead of general disarmament under increased confidence, there will now be increased preparations for war.

During this critical hour Europe was standing at the parting of the ways. The Sudeten portion of Czechoslovakia was the spearpoint of advance of the Teutons' drive to the east. Long ago Bismarck pointed out that he who held Czechoslovakia held the key to central Europe. It was the chief bone of contention between the west and the east, the final barrier that separated Hitler from his vast prospective empire.

Hitler with his powerful army could thunder his demands for self-determination for his "persecuted" Sudeten Germans. But would Chamberlain admit this principle for the people of India or of other parts of the British empire? Would Britain be willing to yield Wales or Ireland to Hitler for the sake of peace at any price, or give independence to the Arabs in Palestine? Would Mussolini grant autonomy to the helpless Germans in the Austrian Tyrol? Every discontented minority in Europe when the occasion arises will now clamor for self-determination or independence. The aggressive Germans have already been agitating in Danzig, Memel, in Poland, Rumania, Hungary and on all borders of the Reich. This victory by threat of force speeds the military and imperial advance of a ruthless dictatorship that will now, by the removal of this one barrier, hold the hegemony of Europe and consolidate the

sixty-eight million population and the resources of the Danubian and Balkan peninsula clear to Constantinople.

If world war comes, there is every indication that it will begin as an international conflict and develop into a class war in country after country, as it did in czarist Russia at the close of the last war. Civil war is infinitely more cruel and destructive than international conflict. It results always in the killing of prisoners and the extermination of class enemies on both sides, though the terror is usually begun by the reactionary white forces. The workers are always the chief victims, while the foreign invaders, such as the Moors or the forces of Hitler and Mussolini in Spain, become the principal executioners. This whole class issue has been hidden within the recent crisis. In the end Chamberlain had to make his choice between Germany and Russia as allies. Judged by his record first in Spain and then in Czechoslovakia, Chamberlain chose to back Hitler or to yield to his demands, and to turn his back upon Russia. This will tend to unite capitalist, imperialist and fascist nations, accentuate the class struggle and hasten class war.

Chamberlain had already shown us his record in Spain. There also he had to choose between fascists and the forces of labor. There was not a single communist, socialist or anarchist in the first liberal cabinet of republican Spain. Yet, though Hitler was the chief menace to peace and the principal foe of the British empire,¹⁹ Chamberlain consistently favored the fascist coalition between Franco, Mussolini and Hitler. He persistently maintained the "ghastly farce" of the Nonintervention Committee, where at one meeting Germany and Italy could solemnly declare they had no soldiers in Spain, while the following week Mussolini could boast of a victory won by his Italian troops, of whom there were at one time over a hundred thousand in the Iberian peninsula. Meantime Hitler and Mussolini were getting possession of the strategic Balearic Islands, menacing the one undefended frontier of France, and fortifying strategic positions that rendered the harbor of Gibraltar and the western Mediterranean untenable. Chamberlain per-

mitted Germany and Italy to police the whole government coast of Spain and insisted on France's closing her borders and not fulfilling her treaty obligations with the Spanish republic to supply her with munitions. Chamberlain is not only the prime minister of an empire whose chief menace is Hitler, but he is the representative of his capitalist class. As such, he is instinctively against Soviet Russia, a people's government in Spain, or a future Labor government in Great Britain. Having now thrown his weight against Czechoslovakia, her sovereignty and integrity, and come out in favor of Hitler and his imperial plan, he has been unconsciously helping in the economic alignment of the next conflict as a developing class war. If Chamberlain had stood for the integrity of Czechoslovakia he could, without the necessity of war, have united the democracies and Soviet Russia against fascism, the chief menace of the world today. But having aligned himself with Hitler the last barrier to the nazi advance may be swept away; Europe is now a seething caldron and fascism is on the march toward world empire.

Lord Cecil, who, with nearly all liberals and radicals in Britain, had been deeply humiliated by Chamberlain's action, wrote to the British press to ask of what value would be any guarantee of Hitler's. He said that Czechoslovakia already had a guarantee from France and the British empire that they would "respect and preserve as against external aggression her political independence and territorial integrity" (in the League of Nations Covenant). He added that Germany from the time of Frederick the Great to Bethmann-Hollweg and Hitler has always regarded any such guarantee as a "scrap of paper."

But Chamberlain strove for peace for the empire at any price, whatever smaller nations were sacrificed and however democracy was betrayed. Perhaps Chamberlain by his action has done more to alienate moral sentiment in liberal America than any man in British history since Lord North and the American Revolution. We do not feel unkindly toward Lord North, whose action, however blind, concerned a single colony. But the action of Chamberlain has affected the whole world.

We would not judge him harshly nor even question his *bona fides*. He was only blind, as his class is blind, and as most Christian people are blind in the present class structure of the capitalist democracies. It is just that moral blindness that if continued may make revolution inevitable. It was the same moral blindness of the class-conscious Pharisees that made the crucifixion inescapable. Here is the tragedy of the modern world. But as it is our economic and moral blind spot, most of our class cannot and will not see this truth but will violently resent any suggestion of it.

The democracies are now in retreat all along the line. The successive milestones of their shameful surrender are marked by Manchuria, Ethiopia, Spain, China, Austria, and Czechoslovakia. They have alienated or sacrificed as potential allies Soviet Russia, the strongest nation in Europe, America, Poland and the Little Entente, and world public opinion. This is no settlement but a vast unsettlement. It is not peace but a sword that is in the hands of the advancing hosts of fascism. A Frankenstein monster has been loosed in Europe. Alas, it will now be a different world with democracy shamelessly betrayed, and fascism aided in its trampling march to power.

NOTES

¹ He thus describes the occasion of this monumental work in his own words: "Rome having been stormed and sacked by the Goths under Alaric their king, the worshipers of false gods, or pagans, as we commonly call them, made an attempt to attribute this calamity to the Christian religion. . . . It was this which kindled my zeal for the house of God and prompted me to undertake the defense of the City of God."

² Fascism is a movement of the lower middle class which, when threatened, threw in its lot with the owning classes. In this way they sided against their natural allies the workers and with their capitalist enemy. This was partly due to the Marxists who would reduce all society to a proletarian level and who ignored the legitimate aspirations of the middle class. Drab, materialistic Marxism did not appeal to the developed individualism and culture of this middle class.

³ We are indebted to Canon Lloyd for his clear exposition of Spann's position. See his *Revolutionary Religion*, p. 79.

⁴ Alfred Rosenberg, leader of culture for the Reich, declares that this book "represents the unshakable basis of National Socialist feeling and thought for today, tomorrow and the days beyond." Its circulation is almost compulsory and is far wider among the nazis than that of the Bible ever was.

⁵ This and the following quotations are from the unexpurgated 1935 edition. See pp. 741, 766.

⁶ Pp. 648, 188, 315, 782.

⁷ P. 70.

⁸ Pp. 252-53.

⁹ Published by Gollancz in London.

¹⁰ In 1938 they had over 4,000 state farms for the production of grain, 246,000 collective farms in socialized agriculture, 5,800 tractor stations, 367,000 tractors and 104,000 combines. They had united over twenty-two million small impoverished holdings into a quarter of a million collectives of growing prosperity, so that over 95 per cent of the output of agriculture had already been socialized. The former age-long problem of famine in Russian agriculture has probably been solved forever.

¹¹ II Thess. 3:10.

¹² Under its powerful hierarchy, second only to the czarist state in power, the Orthodox Church had over 80,000 churches and chapels, 112,000 priests and deacons, a thousand monasteries with over 100,000 monks and nuns, and possessed some 20,000,000 acres of the richest land.

¹³ In Soviet Russia, for instance, there are only some 2,000 private automobiles and about 100,000 cars for officials, while in the United States there are over 25,000,000 automobiles, or about one car for every family. The little town of Wooster, Ohio, has (1939) as many private automobiles as the whole Soviet Union.

¹⁴ Mr. F. Lundberg's *America's Sixty Families* will repay a critical reading. Queen Victoria's estate was valued at some \$45,000,000, and that of the present King of England at less than \$4,000,000. The fortunes of several American families reach from one to two billion dollars, and their income, ranging as high as \$30,000,000 to \$50,000,000 a year, is several times that of the former czar of Russia.

¹⁵ This *Report of the National Emergency Council* shows that these 36,000,000 Americans are the poorest people in the country. The south is the belt of "sickness, misery, and unnecessary death." Fully half the families are ill-housed and 4,000,000 need rehousing. Sweated child-labor abounds and there is no basic woman's wage or adequate protection for women except in two of the southern states. The region is often exploited by absentee northern capitalists. Even farm operators have to pay as high as 20 per cent interest, and sharecroppers sometimes twice that. Illiteracy is 8.8 per cent, as compared to 1.9 per cent in the north central states, and one-tenth of one per cent in Denmark and Sweden.

The report shows that low wages and poverty are self-perpetuating, they give little purchasing power, or right of collective bargaining, or hope of any solution of the basic problem of wealth and poverty under the present capitalistic system. Tuberculosis, malaria, pellagra from malnutrition, and syphilis increase in the depths of poverty with general demoralization — physical, mental, moral and spiritual.

¹⁶ If anyone doubts the above statements, let him read *The Flivver King*, by Upton Sinclair, Station A, Pasadena, California. If Mr. Sinclair's statements can be challenged he can easily be sued for libel. Here the reader will find the record of the "battle of Dearborn" on March 23, 1932, when this employer's gunmen fired and killed four and wounded several score in a procession of unarmed, unemployed men asking for work, or for the alternative of relief such as all the other employers of the city were providing.

¹⁷ See *Your Million Dollars*, by Upton Sinclair, Pasadena, California, for a forcible statement of many of the facts here used.

¹⁸ There have been twenty-five depressions in America in a hundred and fifty years; but world depressions are now commensurate with world wars.

¹⁹ Many observers have urged that one of the most fateful and significant facts in the present world situation is the divided interest of Britain's governing class. On the one hand, imperial interest finds in fascism its worst enemy. This is due to the fact that fascist countries are uniformly impoverished and desire to destroy the prevailing economic situation. Class interests, however, see in communism their worst enemy because of its theoretic denial of private ownership of the means of production. Governing classes win and maintain their position when class and national interests coincide. The above-mentioned divergence of class and national interests on the part of Britain's governing class is one of the most ominous portents for the future of democracy.

IX

CHRISTIANITY IN THE MODERN WORLD

THE ANTIRELIGIOUS MOVEMENT

WE HAVE glanced briefly at the working of the three conflicting systems of fascism, communism and capitalism, each with its terrible evils, under which multitudes daily suffer. The evils under the first two are connected chiefly with the denial of liberty. Both these absolutist systems are of necessity in opposition to autonomous religion, whose followers, and especially whose youth, must not be allowed to serve two masters. The merits of the third or democratic system derive chiefly from the freedom it allows its liberals, but its glaring evils are its fundamental and inevitable denial of justice. It would seem to a neutral observer that the evils of all three systems are insufferable and cannot tamely be endured forever. How then is Christianity concerned, and what is its relation to these three systems?

Can a Christian accept a fascist or nazi system which sadistically persecutes the Jews, despises the Negro and other "inferior" races, throws heroic Christians like Niemöller into concentration camps, proposes to Germanize or change the map of Europe and menaces the rest of the world with war? Or can a Christian accept the claim to absolute obedience of an officially atheist state which, in the pursuit of its violent revolutionary aims, feels it must liquidate religion of all kinds as its enemy? In both kinds of totalitarian state the conflict between Caesar and Christ seems absolute. Fortunately most of us, however, are not compelled to live under either a fascist or a

communist dictatorship. But what shall we say of the evils that are all about us as the inevitable results of our present system? What shall we say of the poverty, disease, slums, and moral degradation of multitudes of our brethren, as the price that must be paid for the capitalist privileges of the few? Liberals are horrified at the numbers killed under the present purge in Soviet Russia. As a matter of fact they are only a small fraction of the numbers destroyed under capitalism by poverty, preventable disease, slum conditions, crime and recurring wars.

We have already seen the ignoble part played on the whole by organized religion in its attitude to contemporary evils during most of the past nineteen centuries, but what part is organized religion playing in the modern world?

Christianity seems to be becoming once again, as before the Middle Ages, a minority movement — not a courageous, flaming minority that disturbs the conscience of the world, but a diluted, worldly and relatively impotent minority. In parts of what was once Christendom, Christianity is now persecuted or derided. In other spheres of life it is ignored as effete. To our shame it must be confessed that it is not chiefly Hitler or Stalin, but Christians themselves who have discredited their religion. Instead of the church now challenging the world and imposing its higher standards upon it, it is the world that now imposes its standards upon the church. Our contributions to social life in industry and politics have surely not been distinctive or impressive.

Over against this ineffectiveness of the church, the advance of the opposing forces in a return to primitive paganism, the rise of rationalistic atheism, the anti-Christian and anti-God movements and the almost complete secularization of life are a challenge to all. The atheist — that is, the man who in practice leaves God out of his life — is perfectly at home in the world today. It is the Christian who feels out of his element. He is not claiming the kingdoms of the world for the Kingdom of his God. The world which was once at least largely nominally christianized is now becoming again paganized and secularized

as under ancient Rome. Indeed, the antireligious forces are far more effective today than under the pagan empire.

Greece, the cradle of free thought, produced but few materialists and atheists such as Heraclitus and Democritus, and Rome but few skeptics like Lucretius. The Renaissance, in its revolt against the hardened creeds of Christendom, produced men like Machiavelli with his cynical theory that might was right, utilizing religion as the instrument for keeping the drugged people in subjection.

In the doubting eighteenth century unbelief became bolder and better organized. Voltaire attacked the church as the defender of inequality and injustice. The nineteenth century became completely secularized. Nietzsche, the son of a Protestant pastor, as an individual anarchist led a revolt against the "slave morality" of Christianity, saying, "I loathe Christianity with a deadly loathing." He repudiated the idea of God together with all human sympathy and pity, and unconsciously prepared the way for both Mussolini and Hitler, for their master morality and master state.

The Paris Commune of 1871 was the first stage in the proletarian antireligious revolution. It was, however, Marx, Lenin and Stalin who, in philosophy and in history, established the first antireligious, atheist state. Yet they sought to establish social justice, which had been neglected by ecclesiastical bodies for nineteen centuries. They were antireligious because they believed that religion always stood for organized injustice under the dominance of the owning class. It is one of the anomalies of history that the prophetic demand for a program of justice for humanity is now introduced not by Christians but by flaming atheists.

Following the communist efforts to liquidate religion came the attack of the nazis. The nazi Count Reventlow attacks Christianity in all its forms. General Ludendorff and his wife write of Christ as a false prophet: "He was a Jew and thus the source of every evil." Alfred Rosenberg in his *Mythus des 20. Jahrhunderts* advocates an "anti-Christian worldly re-

ligion." He says, "There is not the least valid reason for the view that Jesus was of Jewish origin." The Old Testament must be "done away with once and for all," and the old German myths and legends recovered.

In Spain, Harnack shows us, there has been a "contrast between a coarse worldliness and fanatical strictness which has characterized the history of the Spanish church in every age." Spain naturally became the land of the Inquisition and of ecclesiastical terror. The church had become corrupt and wealthy, and was largely responsible for the poverty and illiteracy of the masses. The result was that in almost every modern revolution the anarchist followers of Bakunin began to kill priests and burn churches to avenge themselves upon what they considered the worst enemy of the people. The same was true in the Philippines when they became free. In the matters of social justice, liberty, education of the masses and human welfare, the record of the church has not been one to be proud of in Spain, Mexico or other Latin American countries. In Turkey virulent nationalism under Kemal Ataturk often repudiated belief in God. Aldous Huxley points out that dictators have always opposed real religion.

It is thus evident that in Russia, in Germany, in Turkey, in Spain, in Mexico and other countries, the war against religion is gathering headway. And even this is not in reality half so serious as the complete secularization of vast areas of life and the worldliness and impotence of many of the churches. It is one of the strange anomalies of history that although the Christian religion began with the poor, it has now come to pass that earnest atheists are seeking to build a social order of economic justice, or righteousness, while Christians are the chief supporters of the *status quo*, the capitalist system of organized injustice. How has this strange transformation taken place?

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN THE MODERN WORLD

Prophetic religion began with the call of Amos for social justice and culminated with Micah's, "What doth the Lord

require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Jesus gathered up and fulfilled the Law and the prophets in his call to repentance to enter a Kingdom of righteousness, or right relations "on earth."

In place of his ideal of a social Kingdom of right relations, men interpreted his message as selfish personal "salvation"; they banished religion from the real world of human need to an unreal, ideal future world. Finally the religion of Jesus and the prophets became the otherworldly, selfish and at times false religion which entered into alliance with the successive social evils of war, slavery, feudalism and capitalism. Like Pharisaism, it sometimes even became pseudo-religion.

As we pointed out earlier in this book, there are four basic elements in Jesus' conception of a Kingdom of righteousness, or right relations, which prove in experience to be the fundamental needs or demands of every normal human being — justice, liberty, a creative, abundant personal life, and a widening fellowship or brotherhood in which alone peace can be realized. A man, however inarticulate, does not want to be robbed or exploited but craves justice. His best self wants enough freedom to realize and express his own life without depriving others of justice or liberty. He wants creatively to realize the abundant potentialities of his hitherto dormant and repressed but now awakening being. And in place of an endless brute struggle for existence, he craves a widening fellowship in his family and his group, a craving that can finally and ideally be satisfied only in a universal fellowship.

And these were just the ideals and demands of Jesus and the principal elements of his Kingdom on earth. As righteousness, or justice, was the first burden of the prophets, so it was for Jesus the first of the weightier matters of the Law.¹ He came to give liberty, to release all the oppressed and enslaved from bondage and fear. He came that they might have life more abundant, both material and spiritual. And as the Prince of Peace, he came to provide the only foundation for lasting peace in justice. No other concept save that of his Kingdom had

finally envisaged the possible universal fellowship of all men as men. His mother and brethren were all who would do the will of God. His universal religion of the Good Samaritan, denying all sectarian divisions of race, color, nation, creed or religion, ministers to man as man — any man, every man who will follow this way of life. These four principles of the Kingdom of God — justice, liberty, abundant life, and a universal brotherhood of peace — are fulfilled for Jesus in his all-embracing principle of love.

The inversion of these four virtues or elements in the spiritual Kingdom is injustice, denial of liberty, impoverished life, and the strife of the selfish or privileged individual, class, race, religion or nationality against all others. This strife culminates in class war and international anarchy.

Once Jesus' Kingdom "on earth" had been banished to a future, ideal, unreal world, the caricature of his religion actually came to incorporate these four vices which were the inversion of the characteristics of his Kingdom. Organized Christianity often actually became not a dynamic but an opiate, not a call to build a new world but the reactionary support of the old.

This travesty of the religion of Jesus furnished the cross as the sign of conquest for the bloody wars of Constantine; it instigated the persecution of heretics; it was the guide of the Inquisition of the Catholic Church in Spain; it was the pillar of the state of the Bourbons, the Romanoffs, the Hapsburgs and the Hohenzollerns. It was the religion of the slaveowners of the nineteenth century, and of the owners of the means of production of twentieth century capitalism. Not that these were all bad men. Far from it. Like the Pharisees many of them were and are the best religious people of their time. For seventeen centuries most of the rulers and owners and members of the privileged class have been religious people and professing Christians. The organized church and state and the possessing class have usually stood together. After the failure of organized religion through all the centuries to give justice, the im-

perative task of the social revolutionary seemed to be to destroy what had become false religion. It should have been the first task of the true follower of Jesus rather than of the atheist.

If the Good Samaritan of the parable would minister to all, how much more must the God of the Good Samaritan do so? Our first need is to have our eyes opened to see God actually at work in all history and in his world today. He works not only through the prophet Isaiah, but through the pagan idolator Cyrus, calling him his "chosen" instrument, his "shepherd," his "anointed." He works not only through the prophet Joel, but equally through Joel's contemporary Socrates. He is the light that lighteth every man, the God who made of one blood all men and desires all men to become one ultimate fellowship. He uses not only those who know him, but knows those who know him not, and works through those who are unconsciously doing his will, even though they do not as yet know his name. He is a God not only of continuous creation but of continuous judgment. He is at work not only in patient evolution but, when that fails, in swift revolution, and he makes the wrath of man to praise him.

He presumably works not in those who say "Lord, Lord" and who repeat the shibboleths of orthodoxy, but in those who will do his will, who seek justice, release the oppressed, make life more abundant and work for ultimate fellowship. Christ said clearly of every man who is thus unconsciously seeking to do his will, "He that is not against us is for us." We must admit that the greater part of the work for justice in the world today is being done outside the ranks of organized religion.

But our eyes are closed. Every unemancipated man has an economic blind spot, he is the prisoner of his own class and age. For nineteen centuries most of the best Christian people could not even see that slavery was wrong if they belonged to a class or section where their economic interests were at stake. Not the few slaveowners but the educators and clergy were the chief defenders of the system in the south in the United States. So today the beneficiaries of capitalism and the classes depend-

ent upon them are usually blind to the evils of their own system, and count it almost treason to demand the substitution of a Christian social order of justice, liberty, abundance for *all* under a planned economy, and a classless brotherhood.

Quite unconsciously we all belong to an economic class and think according to our class. Most Christians believe in charity for the poor rather than in the rights of labor. They think that if we only had ideal labor leaders who would preach co-operation between labor and capital all would be well. They do not see that every country gets the kind of labor leader its system produces, just as it gets the kind of Jews or Negroes or other class that it deserves. American employers who are ready to use violence to preserve their special privileges will in the end be met with violence by labor. General Smedley Butler says that American employers are already violent. In twenty states they have recently called out against strikers the National Guard, which was prepared to use "bullets, gas and tanks," rather than give equal justice to the workers.²

The armed forces of the state, the National Guard and police, are habitually the instruments of the ruling class for "law and order" and property rights. Law itself is but the crystallization of the customs imposed by the owners who are the ruling class. Therefore legality is not the equivalent of justice or morality. It is class law and class justice. Disinherited labor thus often appears to be on the lawless side and when driven to violence it turns against the opiate of false religion as well as against the oppressive, owner-controlled state.

If several families in America possess over a billion dollars each, with incomes ranging from \$20,000,000 to \$50,000,000 a year, while thousands are struggling to live on ten cents a day, then there are, undeniably, classes of rich and poor in this "land of the free." If there are such classes there is already, whether we know it or not, discontent, indignation, and class conflict. Class conflict tends to deepen into class war or violent revolution. What then is the solution?

The typical capitalist proposal is at all costs to keep the

masses quiet. Better peace at any price, even the price of poverty and injustice for the masses, than any unconventional disorder or lawless action. But history repeats the lesson that thwarted evolution brings revolution, that no possessing class, blinded by self-interest, has ever seen the whole situation in time to grant full justice and willingly enter a socialized planned economy.

The solution that labor proposes is to claim the essential right of collective bargaining, to organize trade unions and demand justice. If in any country basic rights are denied and every effort to achieve them by legal methods is thwarted, if those in possession of property, industry, government and the whole system of justice use all necessary force, legal or illegal, to crush every effort for a just social order, then history will repeat itself and the masses will be driven to violence. In the meantime "he that is not for us is against us." Whatever the nature of the struggle, do we take our stand with the possessing or the dispossessed class, the owners or the poor? With which class did Christ identify himself?

This leads us to the consideration of the whole question of violence in relation to war and revolution.

THE CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE TO WAR

Nearly all of us can agree at the outset that modern war has become a boundless evil, that as never before it conflicts with the highest morality, and that it has now become the world's chief social menace. World war inevitably means the maximum destruction of human life. In the last war not only the sixty-six million men mobilized were involved; more noncombatants than soldiers lost their lives through war and disease. The total loss of life, direct and indirect, during and after the war, was finally estimated at forty million. War also destroys material wealth. It leaves a staggering burden of debt upon future generations and it is followed by crises and world depressions.

War is destructive of moral standards and carries all other

evils in its train. It victimizes multitudes on both sides by distorted propaganda. It is forced to use ruthless military methods. It inevitably employs the method of reprisal and counter-reprisal, of atrocity and counter-atrocity. It has become so terrifying in its destructiveness that a series of world wars now threatens to destroy our very civilization. The church as an international agency with supernational sanction presumably can do more to stop war than any other agency. What can the church do to prevent war and what should be the attitude of the Christian to war while it still continues?

Thought and study will convince the majority that there is no position that can be proved to be the one and only right Christian attitude. The roots of our words "moral" and "ethical" both mean custom. Custom has determined both social codes and individual conscience. The ever changing content of ethical codes is always relative and never absolute. The only final rational guide to conduct is found in experience interpreted by reason. The guide to Christian conduct is experience interpreted by reason in the light of the spirit of Christ.

But what is the spirit of Christ? Christianity does not authoritatively lay down an unchanging code of conduct that takes the place of the law of Sinai. It rather inspires and motivates us to seek the highest ends and values in ever changing situations. The Sermon on the Mount is not a second Sinai. It reveals the ideal spirit of fellowship in the beloved community. It cannot be legislatively imposed for the conduct of a state, which necessarily always depends on force. The injunction to turn the other cheek and love one's enemies seems at first sight to be contradicted by such an act as driving the money-changers from the temple.

As a matter of fact, equally good Christians who earnestly study the sources always come to at least two differing positions with regard to the destructive use of force. All through history there are two types of minds, idealists and realists. If

we may judge from the analogy of slavery, these two classes of men will have to cooperate for the final abolition of the war system. There will be a minority and a majority, the absolute idealists and the realists. When slavery was challenged in England and America there were the idealists or abolitionists, like Wilberforce and William Lloyd Garrison. And there were men like Pitt and Abraham Lincoln, the representatives of the large democratic majority, who were relativists, realists or pragmatists. Together they finally stopped slavery. England and a dozen other countries chose the better way, the appeal to reason and law; the United States took the way of violence and civil war, which left in its wake the unsolved problem of embittered race prejudice.

The same two classes will have to challenge the greater evil of the war system. These will be the idealists or absolute pacifists, and the pragmatists, relativists and realists who will use every means under heaven to prevent war, whether diplomacy, sanctions or boycott, even if these means should lead ultimately to defensive war.

To which class the reader will eventually belong will be determined largely by his approach to the problem. The man who takes the personal, absolutist, perfectionist standpoint will probably view the destruction of human life as an absolute sin. If he is to love his fellow men he feels he cannot hate or kill them. Since he must seek individually to obey the injunction, "Ye therefore shall be perfect," he will feel that he cannot take part in the boundless evil of mass murder. As he would not go out to commit private murder at the behest of any state or church, neither will he be willing to commit mass destruction by machine-guns, poison gas or bombs. He may feel, as many pacifists do, that he cannot compromise with the vast war system of the modern state. He often feels he could not be a member of the government, a policeman or officer of the law, for in that position he would have to sanction preparedness for defense and police action which must often be responsible for the taking of human life. He is convinced that his sole re-

sponsibility is to do right himself, whatever comes, and leave results to God.

Peace is undoubtedly part of the final ideal, the end of human life. This truth is clearly stated, for instance, in Isaiah. The pacifist sees it and at terrible personal cost bows to its command. Thus he both witnesses the peace which is in God and is privileged to share it. On the other hand he sees the evil in every conflict and is also privileged to withdraw from it in great measure. It is his role to detect the presence of conflict and to point out its evil.

Now what is the status of this achievement? We may regard it as an individual achievement of the pacifist. He becomes the practical model for others. But while such a course may issue in evangelism it may also mean self-righteousness. Against himself the pacifist usually has no criticism; against others he has nothing but criticism. At this point two observations are in order. First, the achievement of the pacifist is never perfect. The very clothes he wears implicate him in the conflicts and injustices of the textile industry, as in all the other sins of the social order. But he may reply that he does not will the conflict and repudiates any share in it. This leads to the second question. Does the pacifist refuse to share the conflict that produces his clothes? If so, for this very reason, his share of the conflict is borne by others and by his withdrawal he *makes them worse*.

The wealthy Quaker often accepts the legal protection of his economic privileges which rest upon force, but he frequently does nothing to change the system of capitalism which is organized injustice maintained by force. The whole economic system is one of competitive strife and class war, which periodically produces world war. The individual Christian is a responsible part of the economic order. If he has vision he must seek radically to change this Moloch-like economic system and not live complacently upon its special privileges. Whether industrial, civil or international, peace is indivisible; and we repeat, there can be no enduring peace which does not rest upon justice.

There is another and much more socially responsible interpretation of pacifism. This is to regard it as asceticism. The pacifist is called to pacifism as to a vocation. He feels he is called by God to bear witness to his holy peace and his condemnation of the sin of strife. Also, the pacifist is called by society for the same reason. The pacifist is not a "perfect" individual, self-righteously vaunting his goodness. Rather men consider him at best a sort of embodied conscience, to bear witness to the goal of peace and to convict them of sin. *He* does not condemn society; in him *society condemns itself*. Meanwhile society bears his unborne share of the common sin. Ideally it does not support the pacifist as a useless luxury but as a socially necessary functionary. Through him mankind remembers its heavenly origin and goal, through him society is led to recall its sins and know the need of the cross and resurrection.

There is a second approach. The man who approaches the ethical problem of war from the social standpoint, as a relativist, pragmatist or realist, cannot settle the question upon these ideal or individual considerations alone, for they do not cover the whole case. He is chiefly concerned not for himself, or even for his conscience, but for his fellow men. Real life never presents a simple choice between an absolute right and an absolute wrong. Actually, in complicated situations, with mixed and conflicting motives, a man always faces a choice between a greater and a lesser evil, and a greater and a lesser good. Not only all wars but all "peace," so called, all economic and political life are mixed with evil. The realist cannot admit that all wars are wrong and that no war has ever accomplished any good or ever settled any question. He would have stood with clear conscience beside Leonidas and his three hundred Spartans in the pass at Thermopylae, for the defense of all future freedom on earth against the Persian hordes. He would have followed Charles Martel in turning back the Moslem hosts from the conquest of Europe. He would have joined Garibaldi and his thousand against the tyranny of the old order, or Washington at Valley Forge in his fight for freedom. It was doubt-

less an evil to kill Persians, Moslems or foreign invaders. But the alternative of despotism in Greece, of Islam in Europe, of absolutism in Italy, or of the subjugation of colonies by tyranny would seem to him an even greater evil than war.

The realist believes in the necessity of the police power in the state, since no government in the world can be maintained without the use of force, even to the taking of human life. The realist knows the difference between the action of the police and war but he cannot believe that, if police power is still necessary in the most advanced city and nation, it is not even more imperative in the outer world of fascism or barbarism. There in the most backward part of the world he feels that society cannot restrict itself to strictly nonviolent, perfectionist methods. He believes that it is the very motive of love that compels him, if all other methods of moral suasion fail, to meet the gangster or the fascist with force. He does not believe it is right to let the gangster rob his city, or the fascist subjugate his nation or the world.

If the realist were a Chinese in China today he would probably count it his duty to defend his country at the cost of his life or that of the invaders. He would believe it far better to belong to a free and united nation that had passed through the fire of affliction with the loss of a million or more of its over-crowded population, than to be enslaved by tyranny and poisoned with opium by a ruthless conqueror.

Thus there is not one exclusively right position, but two or more possible conclusions for sincere Christians. Indeed the same individual often passes through these two phases of thought. Christian logic or the appeal to conscience may lead one to be a pacifist. The logic of events in realistic history sometimes forces him later to the other conclusion. Dick Shepherd said: "Because I am a Christian I am and must be a pacifist." An equally great British leader, Professor John Macmurray, says: "Because I am a Christian I cannot be a pacifist." We thus have two positions, two parties, two vocations in the dialectic tension of progress through conflict, which may be

among the things that work together for the good of ultimate peace.

In the end, after all argument and thought, each must make his decision and his choice between two evils. If he takes the absolutist standpoint and retires to the cell of his individual conscience in China or Spain it is still an evil to see his country overrun, robbed, raped and destroyed, and be not permitted by his conscience forcibly to lift a hand to oppose it. Or, if he takes part in the destruction even of defensive war, many of the things he has to do are evil. There is no logical demonstration in reason or at the bar of conscience that can prove either position absolutely right or absolutely wrong. Since the decision is beyond the range of proof the Christian must take the final step in faith, accepting the position which seems to him the lesser of two evils and the greater of two goods.

But wherever he decides to stand, let him not think that he only is right and all others are wrong. History has often been made by small absolutist minorities which took a stand in advance of their time and suffered the consequences. The sacrifice of Jesus is the supreme example of one who apparently took the absolutist position and put the conscience of the whole world on the defensive. He was both an idealist and a realist.

Both of these positions will be found to be necessary, maintained in dialectic tension, if society is to advance and finally do away with the war system. Whether we are pacifists or pragmatists, somehow we must work together to stop war. The question is whether all together we can stop it in time to save our civilization. Let not the pacifist think that by adopting his seemingly more idealistic position he has abolished war or solved the problem. And let not the majority who march off to the boundless destruction of war and its inevitable aftermath think that they alone are patriots.

The attitude of the realistic and radical Christian is likely to be the same toward the violence of revolution as toward that of war. Again his decision will depend largely upon his line of approach, his training and environment, i.e., upon his preju-

dices. There are many who on principle will not fight in a capitalist international war but who would conscientiously take part in a revolution. If, as we have seen, the owners of the means of production initiate violence to maintain their control under the guise of law and order, then labor actually will be forced to use the same methods. If Christian employers have no scruples in the repressive use of force, organized labor, which is for the most part outside the pale of the church, is not likely to have scruples either. Whether the Christian joins with labor and courageously supports it or not, will depend upon whether he is an absolute idealist or a realist, and whether he belongs to the revolutionary minority, or to the conservative majority who are always with the vested interests.

We shall not achieve lasting peace save on a basis of justice and the application of the four principles of the Kingdom which Jesus taught. Our first object therefore should not be merely to say "peace, peace," when there is no peace but only a temporary truce of oppressive injustice. We must all together strive to remove the causes of war by seeking first the principles of Jesus' Kingdom, the chief of which is justice. The principal source of war today, civil or international, is the economic injustice of our capitalist society. Therefore we must first of all address ourselves to the basic problem of economic justice.

NOTES

¹ Matt. 23:23; Luke 11:42.

² General Butler says: "In the past two years large National Guard forces have seen active service in twenty strikes in as many different states, from the Pacific coast to New England, from Minnesota to Georgia. They have used gas, bullets, and tanks against striking workers. . . . I myself helped make Mexico safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American republics for the benefit of Wall Street. . . . We marines operated on three continents."

X

RELIGION IN A REVOLUTIONARY AGE

LET US resume the thought that we are approaching the end of one epoch and the beginning of another. This means that we are probably entering upon a vast transitional, revolutionary period. As wars and depressions now become world-wide, so revolutions will tend to spread.

We repeat that if another world war occurs it will almost certainly turn into a class war in country after country, just as it did in Russia after the last war. To grasp the significance of the present world situation, to state the matter in the simplest form and admittedly in somewhat oversimplified terms, it may be shown that organized society tends to pass through the economic stages of slavery, feudalism, capitalism and its climax or anticlimax of fascism, and finally into a socialized planned economy. Though human development does not run smoothly in our preconceived channel beds, though no two countries are exactly alike or in precisely the same stage of development, nevertheless we may discern a certain meaning and main line of development in history.

Under an economy of slavery, a few owned the workers who were the principal means of production of that era. Under feudalism, a few owned the land which became the chief means of production, while the masses were serfs, half slave and half free, often bought and sold with the land, without much justice, liberty, abundance or brotherhood. In the third stage, under our present system of capitalism, relatively few own, or, what is more important, control the means of production, while the

mass of workers, divorced from ownership of the means of their own livelihood, are helplessly dependent upon the owners, and are without much security of life or assurance of employment or social justice.

As the present stage of capitalism is threatened with disintegration through increasing crises, depressions and widespread unemployment, it is frequently followed by fascism, the last stage of a disintegrating capitalism maintained by force. But fascism is a blind alley. Because of its own inner contradictions it can find no adequate solution of the final problem of an effective social order which includes both justice and liberty. All these orders of slavery, feudalism, capitalism and fascism have been class structures of rich and poor, owners and dependents. All involved the supremacy of one class and the subjection of the workers. And therefore, human nature being what it is, all were necessarily unjust and unstable. The evils in each system may be mitigated, *but no palliative and no reform is possible that will finally make a class society classless, equal, just and brotherly.*

For centuries, by moral suasion or legislation, society tried to make slaveowners, feudal lords or capitalists more generous, but the selfishness of the human heart is such that no class in power ever has given or ever will give equal justice to those dependent upon it. The only solution is the abolition of economic classes by ending the private ownership of the process by which society is fed, clothed, housed and served. Not patchwork reform but revolutionary change is imperative.

From the time of Plato's *Republic*, the early Christian communal groups and Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*, to the days of Henry George's *Progress and Poverty* and Marx and Engels' *Communist Manifesto*, men have dreamed of a new social order based not on the suppression of the majority, but upon equal justice and an economy of abundance for all.

If, now, we are living in an armed world in which three conflicting systems obtain — disintegrating capitalism, aggressive fascism and, in one-sixth of the world, a socialized economy —

then we are probably entering upon the greatest transitional, revolutionary epoch in all world history. Under growing tension the tempo of world movements has become accelerated. A day may become as a thousand years. Either through non-violent evolution or through violent revolution, either constructively in time of peace or destructively in time of war, for the next few decades country after country will seek to pass from the repression and organized injustice of capitalism or fascism, and enter upon a socialized economy. All men will ultimately seek the four essentials mentioned above — justice, liberty, abundance and brotherhood — though they will probably not be all realizable at once.

In the march of history, through the conflict of classes, there has been a mighty driving force toward progress. If we are right in believing that there are four basic needs in every normal man's heart, and four principles in Jesus' conception of the Kingdom of God, then these are even now becoming the drives of history, dynamic and cumulative, as men awake and become self-conscious and class-conscious in their need.

In the stay-in or sit-down strikes in France, the slogan, "A million Frenchmen can't be wrong," was indicative of the growing solidarity in the ranks of organized labor all over the world. It believes that a hundred million workers are not as likely to be wrong on the question of equal justice as are the small minority of owners, who are the privileged beneficiaries of the old order.

These same four basic demands made for the abolition of slavery and brought feudalism and its concomitant of serfdom to an end. There is multiplying evidence that just these demands of justice, liberty, abundance and brotherhood, working through economic and political means, are even now disintegrating the organized injustice of capitalism, and that they will inevitably challenge and overthrow fascism. Neither capitalism nor fascism can claim to offer equal justice, full liberty, an abundant life, both material and spiritual, for all, and a universal and classless fellowship. Both capitalism and fascism seek

to provide special privilege for one class, one race or one favored nation.

Now if all men everywhere are likely, in a transitional or revolutionary epoch, increasingly to demand these four great values or principles, and if God is for us, working in and through men for his Kingdom of right relations, then we may believe that history is indeed tending toward the achievement of an order which shall increasingly realize just these values.

Already one country has actually established, however crudely or forcibly, a completely socialized economy. And it has apparently come to stay. Soviet Russia is, however, still one-sided. It seeks to incorporate the first principle of justice, but, as was clearly foreseen in its philosophy, it dares not yet grant liberty. Its drab, standardized life cannot yet be called abundant either materially or spiritually. It can hardly yet claim to be a classless fellowship or brotherhood when it is creating ever fresh enemies whom it feels it must shoot. In the matter of social justice alone is Soviet Russia succeeding. But this makes it the most important experiment in the world, because for five thousand years justice has been the missing link in the social order. For if there is no justice, there is little liberty, abundance or fellowship.

Judged by the standard of these four principles, the capitalist democracies of the west have lamentably failed. Though they possess the technical capacity for abundant production, the profit motive forces them to maintain a policy of artificial scarcity, which is viewed with growing indignation by the hungry masses. And certainly capitalist countries are not in sight of a classless brotherhood for all, black and white, poor and rich.

These democratic countries have, however, both in their constitutions and in their actions, endeavored to guarantee liberty. The communist has no more right to sneer at this liberty as a hypocritical bourgeois prejudice, than has the democratic liberal to denounce communist justice because of the purges it involves at present. But much more important than their ideal of liberty, these Western democracies, with all their faults,

have a priceless heritage which is their greatest asset, though still a hidden and unutilized treasure — the revolutionary religion of Jesus and the dynamic power of his spiritual Kingdom.

Here, then, is a historic dialectical situation. From the theses and antitheses of these fragmentary and opposing systems, can we advance to a final synthesis that shall include the values of both? To answer this question we must seek to realize the meaning, in history, of the dialectic advance of progress through conflict.

As the first Jewish prophet, Amos, called for justice and said that the day of the Lord would bring the darkness of judgment and not light, so one whom many believe to be the last Jewish prophet of righteousness, or justice, came with his message concerning that day of judgment, though he called it by a different name. Jewish himself, he had derived more than he knew from the prophets of Israel, but he was, like many of the prophets before him, filled with burning indignation and wrath against false religion, which had led the people astray. He placed his faith in the dispossessed poor, believing that they would bring in an order of righteousness by the dialectic process of progress¹ through conflict.

Of the two master motives of all human action, hunger and love, Marx emphasized only the hunger motive, dwelling almost exclusively upon the economic, the material, the negative aspects of life, as though man could live by bread alone. Divorced from the love motive, this led to fierce struggle between groups motivated by hate in the class war. At the other extreme the disassociation of love from hunger, of the spiritual from the practical in otherworldly pseudo-religion, turns love into a mockery. One extreme leads to the tyranny of Soviet Russia, the other to the organized injustice and inverted values of capitalism. Jesus recognized both groups of motives and kept them in right proportion. He was concerned with the practical and material needs of men and bade his followers pray: "Give us this day our daily bread." But the hunger motive is included in and subservient to the love motive.

The original thesis of Jewish prophetic religion, set up at a time when the nation was ideally religious through and through, commanded men to love God with all their hearts and their neighbor as themselves. But the Jewish people did not apprehend and follow this noble truth. Then came the necessity of the stern antithesis — the disciplinary Law, and even captivity. Finally Jesus came as the fulfillment of the positive thesis of the prophets and the negative antithesis of the Law, and gathered up the truth of both into the synthesis of his gospel.

As a new thesis of positive truth his followers were bidden to go into all the world as the heralds of this whole gospel. But alas, however perfect it was, we must candidly admit that for nineteen centuries Christians have failed to fulfill it, just as the Jews failed under both prophetic and legal religion. Has there come at last a dynamic antithesis to the now largely inverted religion, or pseudo-religion, of organized Christianity? However negative, destructive and violent it may be, is there a movement that will not only challenge but in time actually destroy the “wood, hay and stubble” of what is false in our religion? We must remember that God not only continually creates but periodically judges and destroys, and his judgments in history are frequently violent.

Professor Macmurray concludes: “The separation of communism and Christianity into conscious antagonism means that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!” The imperfectly realized ideal of economic justice of the former, “if it is the precise opposite of pseudo-Christianity, it is for that very reason the negative element which is essential to real Christianity and which must be established within it. The problem that faces us is the synthesis of the two, not in theory merely but in practice. A synthesis is not the same thing as a combination. It necessarily involves a change in the form of both. . . . The synthesis is only to be achieved by the reformation of Christianity.” Professor Macmurray believes that the transformation of communism will finally be the task of Christianity. “The religious revolution is the immediate and special responsibility

of Christians. . . . There must be war to the death between real and unreal religion, concretely in terms of the Christian denunciation and criticism of the existing structure of society.”²

THE NEXT STEP

In the past, history has alternated between long stages of slow evolutionary development and transitional epochs culminating in swift and sweeping revolutionary change. Both were necessary in the dialectic progress. As Jesus warned his disciples, men eat and drink and drift till the catastrophe is upon them. Jesus himself led the supreme revolution in the spiritual realm, as, later, Marx and Lenin did in the material.

In each period the vast majority in the forces of organized religion are the conservative supporters of the old order who are driven only reluctantly toward the new age. They overwhelm the revolutionary individual and minority and defeat their efforts for change or reform. If, however, the forces of organized religion do not rise to the task of inspiring and guiding the revolutionary change even when it becomes overdue, then the leadership passes to some more plastic social instrument for the achievement of the perennial and cumulative fourfold demand of humanity.

That instrument is usually the disinherited mass of the old order organized for action. If church and state stand together for reaction they go down together to destruction, or temporary submergence.

Original Christianity is not merely a reforming but a revolutionary faith. The demand of its Kingdom is inevitably revolutionary compared with the class privileges of the old order, or to the inverted values of pseudo-religion. The Kingdom of God is ideally the reign of the divine purpose, first in the nation of the chosen people, ultimately in the world. To the worldly majority in the church, however, God seems to be the great cosmic, conservative agent for the defense of property and the legality of the *status quo*. But Jesus said that not one

stone of the old order was to be left upon another. That order was built upon the sand of individual and class privilege and great would be the fall thereof. Only what was built upon the principles of his Kingdom would be lasting.

In the Palestine of Jesus' time, a later historian records, "the wealthy are always getting richer and the poor poorer. The wealthy do not know how to employ their accumulating gains: the needy do not know where tomorrow's bread is to come from." A Galilean laborer's wage averaged a denarius a day, or about eighteen cents.

Sir Thomas More (1478-1535), who goes to the scaffold for justice, says: "Plato acted rightly in refusing to make laws for a country where private property reigns supreme. Such countries may multiply laws until no lawyer could count them, and yet they will never enjoy prosperity, peace and happiness."

From the time of the Industrial Revolution, the present order has meant, as the Hammonds record, "the rise of a class of rich employers and the creation of a large and miserable proletariat." It has resulted in "the capitalized blood of children" and of the workers and unemployed. Yet poverty and scarcity for the many have to be endured as long as capitalism is preserved. From the earliest revolts of impoverished peasants and workers to the riots of the poor which were put down by the Duke of Wellington by ruthless bloodshed in 1830, and to the time of modern strikes, as Reinhold Niebuhr reminds us, "it has been an unvarying tendency among governments and the ruling classes which manipulate governments, when anarchy is actually threatened, to re-establish peace by the use of force, rather than by eliminating the causes of disaffection." Whenever there is violence it is usually the possessing class which initiates it in the name of law and order. In each crisis the forces of organized religion divide. The majority sanctifies the obsolete order, while the small revolutionary minority champions the new.

There is a striking and significant parallel between the apocalyptic coming of the Jewish and Christian Kingdoms and dia-

lectic materialism. All three seek ultimately the same fourfold ends. Jewish, Christian and dialectic apocalyptic all included a philosophy of history which took full account of evil but believed in the final victory of the good. All were pessimistic regarding the existing order of society, seeing it as evil and desiring its speedy end. All held a conception of history which included not only gradual preparation but sudden, catastrophic change. All believed in a power not themselves that was working for the triumph of righteousness. All believed the catastrophe would be violent. In the first two the agent of violent destruction was to be God; in the third it was to be man. The divine intervention was to be revolutionary; not that of what might be called a pacifist God, but an intervention of force a thousand times greater than the force contemplated or executed by human revolutionaries. The wrath of the Day of the Lord in the Old Testament, and the judgment upon the whole earth in the New, contemplated boundless destruction.³ Yet the conventional Christian is horrified at the idea of a purge of the enemies of the Russian workers' state, while he glories in his own necessarily violent revolution in the past and justifies God's unlimited use of destructive violence in judgment.

The call of Jesus to his early followers was to repent and proclaim the glad news of the near advent of the Kingdom. To the modern Christian who has eyes to see and who grasps the full significance of Jesus' creative, constructive spiritual revolution, there comes exactly the same call: "Repent, for the Kingdom of God *is at hand!*" If this is a revolutionary age, economically, politically and religiously, the order that will increasingly embody the ideals of righteousness, freedom, abundance and brotherhood may be at our very doors. If men will yet repent for the evils of the old order — injustice, bondage, scarcity and strife — and for the inversion of the principles of Jesus in so much of the organized religion of our day, they can even now give justice and strive for the introduction, by nonviolent means, of a socialized, planned economy. If they will not, the new order will probably come, as in former transitional epochs,

by volcanic violence. It can come only by unimpeded evolution, or by revolution.

Knowing from a study of modern history just what revolution must mean for the state, for organized religion, for the values of cultural liberalism built up over the centuries, the true follower of Christ will strive with might and main to seek the coming of the Kingdom by nonviolent means. But whether in preparation or fulfillment, in nonviolent or violent transition, his duty is clear. He is first to repent, feeling and bearing the sins of our present social order. Motivated by the constraining love of Christ that will sacrifice itself even unto death, he will seek, first and last, righteousness, liberty, abundance and brotherhood. All that makes for these things he will support. The opposite of these he will oppose as Jesus opposed the money-changers.

APPLIED CHRISTIANITY

Revolutionary religion must be applied to life in all its relationships. It must be implemented by economic and political action if these four principles of the Kingdom of God are ever to be realized on earth. In seeking first the imperative of *justice*, the realistic Christian will work definitely and intelligently in the religious, economic and political field to substitute social ownership of the principal means of production for private monopolistic ownership. To this end he will champion every immediate reform that leads to ultimate revolutionary change. He will advocate every law and institution for the full protection of the workers against the four great risks of life — accident, illness, old age and unemployment. He will seek the restoration of an increasing share of the wealth created by society to the community for social purposes, through the imposition of higher income and inheritance taxes and taxes on land values. He will see the necessity of supporting all progressive legislation that may make a nonviolent transition possible, and not be led astray by the hue and cry that is always raised by the possessing class against every reform that leads toward equal

justice for all. He will work for the reorganization under public ownership and operation of the strategic industries and utilities which are now being grossly mismanaged or have been guilty of shameless profiteering. He will see the necessity of an adequate program of farm relief which will reduce the disparity between urban and rural standards of living. The preceding and following are only suggestions of the concrete ways in which each realistic or revolutionary worker will find he must apply the principles of a Kingdom of right relations to the building of a new social order here and now on earth.

The revolutionary Christian will jealously guard the priceless traditions of *liberty*. Remembering the tendency to impose the dictatorship of fascism in order to preserve the special privileges of capitalism all over the world, he will be aware of the significance of the spread of an Anglo-Saxon type of fascism. He will strive not only to maintain existing liberties but to extend them to the handicapped and oppressed classes especially by the freeing of labor from unfair legal restrictions. Labor has few other weapons than to decline to work if conditions become intolerable, while the possessing class commands government's whole arsenal of force, all economic, judicial and educational institutions, and the control of public opinion by all the avenues of publicity. Possession constitutes nine points of the law. The dispossessed, who have little economic liberty, cannot have full freedom in the political or any other department of life. For economics is the basic, realistic determinant of all social life. Therefore eternal vigilance and courageous action will be the price of liberty.

The true Christian will be the first to demand also an economy of *abundance*, both material and spiritual, for all classes. He will recognize that our existing economy of artificial scarcity makes abundance impossible and necessitates a new socialized economy. He will condemn the destruction of food for the maintenance of capitalist prices and profit, when it is so needed by the poor, who must suffer as long as an economy of scarcity is maintained. He will seek to extend free

public services in the realm of health, recreation, education and culture. He will advocate socialized medicine for the handicapped and impoverished portion of the population, at least equal to that available to all workers by hand and brain in Soviet Russia.

Finally, the Christian will demand the application of the principle of equal and universal *brotherhood*, especially for all to whom it is now denied. He will fight for equal economic opportunity for all those who are exploited by present-day capitalism and imperialism.

Recognizing anti-Semitism as the symptom of the race prejudice which characterizes nazism and fascism, and the sweeping achievements in the abolition of race and color prejudice in Russia's socialized economy, the Christian will seek nothing less than the universal brotherhood implied in the ideal of the Kingdom of God, which everywhere furnishes his pattern and goal. But the realist will see that the Kingdom does not come by the listless aspiration of a sentimental idealism or by the mere reiteration of the vague generalities of love and brotherhood at the end of a sermon each seventh day. His religion must be implemented and embodied in economic and political life. The realist will see that all the four characteristics of the Kingdom depend upon the classless society of a new social order. Recognizing how this has been elsewhere achieved he will cooperate in the triple organization of workers, consumers and voters; in national trade unions, consumers' cooperatives and a more radical political party.

Politically, he will vote with that party and platform which in his estimation most fully embody these four principles and hold the greatest promise of their early achievement. In general, advance is more likely to be made by a liberal or radical party than by a conservative party of vested interests. If the Christian is ready to go down to the roots of things, he will not be afraid of the word "radical," but will be ambitious to be as revolutionary as was his Master.

The Oxford and Edinburgh conferences have led the way

for all Christians. Both approved of uniting and strengthening the two ecumenical movements by setting up a single administrative World Council of Churches which may furnish a lead for divided Protestantism. The valuable Oxford Reports provide ample material for individual or group study, showing how the principles of the Kingdom may concretely be increasingly realized in our religious, economic and political life.

GROUP ACTION

Let us see what a few devoted men have accomplished by working for the ends of justice in a socialized economy. Let us take first the communist group. They were thoroughly grounded in the great dialectic truth of progress through conflict. They sought to build an economy of abundance, for an ultimately free and classless society, which was to become a universal brotherhood. Though using a different vocabulary from ours, they believed they were living as part of the whole of things. They lived by faith in a power which guides and determines the destiny of mankind, and believed that they were instruments for the creation of this universal, classless society or brotherhood. *We* call that power God. Perhaps to this extent the communist has recovered the essential core of a real belief in God, though he has never apprehended his name nor the nature of realistic religion. He knows only of pseudo-religion, whose evils he realizes, however, far more clearly than we do.

Lenin as a single individual embodied the Marxian philosophy in his own life. As a leader of student bands and later of labor groups, he devoted himself completely to working for his ultimate goal — the good of all humanity. For some twenty years he lived in poverty, in prison or in exile. As a refugee in various countries, he served as editor of *Iskra* ("The Spark"), kindling a sacrificial flame in kindred souls all over Europe. After he returned to Russia the fate of the revolution was decided in a single night. When his hour had come, in peril of his life he launched his plan for a workers' state. He democratically con-

sulted the workers at every stage and never for a moment lost touch with them, saying: "For the moment our revolution is the most important thing in the world." After the revolution was accomplished he was shot and later went to his death, a courageous martyr to his cause, which had exacted his absolute devotion. Each evening in Moscow several thousand youths now file past the body of this man who lived his life in poverty, in prison and exile, in order to rekindle their own devotion to the same cause, for what they believe will be a new humanity. And today, though the world is against them, they have organized under the socialized, planned economy of a workers' state one-sixth of the earth. This titanic achievement, unique in all history, was led by one man and accomplished in a single generation.

Or picture again, however evil it may be, what even Hitler has accomplished during two decades. He meets with four men under a broken lamp in the midst of an impoverished and humiliated nation, with a way of life in his mind which he believes will deliver and uplift his people. His ideals may seem to us a mixture of half-truths and falsehood. At least he was capable of a fanatical and sacrificial devotion to his cause. In the decade before he fully imposed his terror, his popular vote rose from a few thousands to over seventeen millions, and his following from a party of six members to the largest political party ever known in Germany. He is today the leader of over seventy million Germans who, in spite of the terrible evils of the system, are more united than ever before in a thousand years of their divided history.

Now if these two individuals and groups could accomplish what they have in utter devotion to their ideal, the one for a new social order and the other for a new nation, what could individuals and groups accomplish if they were equally devoted to the far higher revolutionary ideal of Jesus and his universal spiritual Kingdom? If they would work with the consecration of their Master, or even with the devotion and sacrifice of a Lenin or a Hitler, what could they not do?

As John Wesley said, "The best of all is, *God* is with us." Yes, God is with *us*. Not in any exclusive sense, which would lead us to begrudge or deny his working always and everywhere for the ends of justice, liberty, the abundant life and ultimate brotherhood. But surely if Christ was the revelation of God and the ideas of his Kingdom are potential realities, God must be working everywhere in answer to the devoted effort of those who live the prayer, "Thy Kingdom come."

If, then, we really believe that God is mightily working with us, what could one man, or twelve men, or wider groups do in working for the spiritual, creative, constructive revolution of Jesus? What could they do in the realm of religion, of economics, of politics, of all life? If God is in history and nineteen tragic centuries have taught us anything, we must know that all life must be reclaimed and redeemed. We shall not save the world if we work only from a monk's cell, or from an elevated pulpit, or from an isolated ecclesiastical sphere. We must effectively enter the economic and political market place and drive the money-changers from the lucrative seats of capitalism, if we are ever to have a new social order.

Unfortunately we cannot convert the money-changers. We cannot form an idyllic group of Herod, Pilate and rich young rulers — or of fascists and capitalists today — to cooperate with the poor in introducing a classless society of equal brotherhood, or to prevent the perennial recurrence of the crucifixion.

In the end the Christian is driven back to the beginning, to Christ's call to follow him and to seek his Kingdom on earth, here and now. We view it as an evolutionary Kingdom of gradualness, of seed growing secretly and leaven working silently. Every true believer has his part as a fellow worker with God for righteousness, liberty, abundant life and world brotherhood, which are the marks of the Kingdom, as love is its creative motivation. But it is also revolutionary and apocalyptic, a Kingdom of God which will be the work of God. Too long we have left God out of his world. He is working here and now as much as in the time of Christ, whether in war

or peace, against terrific odds. The modern Christian will not stand gazing to the skies for a miraculous advent on the clouds of heaven. But far off, or near at hand, the Kingdom of God is the one divine event to which the whole creation moves.

“THE DAY OF THE LORD”

The author began this study under the title, “What is Christianity?” and the first chapters were written upon this theme. He found the religion of Jesus to be revolutionary and apocalyptic in its message of a Kingdom of God already at hand, however that religion may have been betrayed and caricatured in the reactionary, antisocial movement of his nominal followers in later centuries. The last five chapters of the book were written amid the stirring events of the recent crisis which changed the face of Europe and the alignment of the powers in the now probable period of war and revolution before us.

A title to connect these two thoughts suggested itself in *Revolutionary Christianity*. At first sight the two words seem to have no connection and fail to span an impassable gulf. But in reality it is not so. If Jesus’ conception of an apocalyptic Kingdom involved a complete change in the social order by the act of God it was thoroughly revolutionary. Modern science, at least in the department of economics that deals with the growing conflict of classes, is also revolutionary and apocalyptic. We are praying for peace when as yet there is no peace in sight. Not even the justice which alone can furnish the foundation of peace has been realized. And the present so-called “peace” of organized injustice cannot be preserved even by continuous miracle. It is useless to say, “peace, peace, when there is no peace.” In the judgment of the writer there are some things even worse than war.

To those who think they see, the signs of the times are more ominous than at any time in the last half-century. It is our belief that the revolutionary religion of Jesus has a contribution to make to this apocalyptic age and that “apart from us they shall not be made perfect.” We must explain our meaning.

In the present unprecedented situation we found the world threatened and torn between three conflicting systems. There is the system of the brute will to power of the superman and supertotalitarian state that menaces the whole world with the "either-or" of slavery or war, according to the program of *Mein Kampf*. Hitler can no more offer a solution of justice and peace than could Nero or Nietzsche. Like Islam he offers a sword and demands submission or death. He can threaten the whole world by brute force; he may by destruction seek a "pure" race of blood and iron; but after persecuting all the growing minorities he cannot create or even contemplate a universal brotherhood. His regime is the most brutal, barbarous, demonic thing on earth.

Lenin, alone against the world, was sure he had the way on that night when he seized the centers of control of the largest country on earth. He and his comrades changed the physical and psychological landscape of a sixth of the earth in two decades. But they cannot as yet adequately create or stop destroying.

In the Soviet Union, despite the titanic ends envisaged in the classless society of a socialized state, communist leaders have at present reached a deadlock. This is due not to fortuitous circumstances but to the nature of their own system. They have declared war to the death on all opposing classes and individuals. Instead of setting up an equal comradeship of the social owners of the means of production, under which the completely socialized state might begin to wither away, they have thus far actually been driven by the logic of events to ever greater tyranny. Yet they *must* kill traitors. Having liquidated three classes of enemies — bourgeoisie, kulaks and Trotskyites — and having left alive and in absolute control but one member of Lenin's original Politbureau, they must still perpetuate their "continuing revolution" against the ever fresh enemies to which the system gives birth. Their revolution has effectively inculcated hate and destruction. It makes of every enemy not one who can be overcome by love, the very idea

of which is anathema to the system, but a personal devil with whom there can be no compromise, but who must be destroyed.

Thus far the communists can find no way out of this deadlock. They have estranged and lost for the time being the confidence of the liberal world by their continuing purge. The horror of it was one element behind the Munich Four-Power Agreement, whereby France committed suicide as a first-class power and Chamberlain purchased a caricature of "peace" by the payment of an annual tribute of Danegeld, rather than join Soviet Russia as an ally.

We have witnessed the humiliating sacrifice by the democracies of Manchuria, Ethiopia, Spain, China, Austria and Czechoslovakia as the first in a growing series of retreats and betrayals. The morning paper quotes Hitler as feeling forced to greater armament because of possible future leaders in Britain, while the British estimate, on the same day, that twelve thousand planes will be necessitated by the Munich settlement — or unselement.

We in capitalist countries cannot, self-righteously, cast the first stone at the evils of the nazi and communist systems. The gigantic beam in our own eye — our system of organized injustice which is so thoroughly condemned by both the other systems, as well as by almost all radicals and liberals and by the growing number of the victims of capitalism — prevents our offering to remove the mote from the eye of the other systems.

Many are disturbed to find themselves on the wrong side of the class conflict, unwillingly lined up with the capitalist and fascist owners, with the rich classes and nations, against the poor to whom their Lord belonged. We do not say, "If he were living today, what would be Jesus' attitude to the monstrous and insufferable evils of all these three systems?" We believe that Jesus *is* living. How does the living God view it and what is he doing about it?

Every realistic believer can say, as did his Master: "My Father worketh hitherto," and he can add, "And I work!" The God who brought his people out of the house of bondage

in Egypt to their promised freedom and inheritance, the God not only of patient millenniums of evolution but of judgment in swift revolution, the God of creation and of destruction, the God of love and of "wrath," of moral indignation at false systems which are slaying or enslaving multitudes — that God is living and working now. Like Professor James' chessplayer, he is the master of every move upon the chessboard of history.

The God of apocalyptic Daniel and of the Revelation, the God of Jesus and the prophetic Marx, the God of dialectic progress through conflict, the God of the cross and the resurrection — that God is even now working effectively and continuously. Whether we will hear or forbear, he will probably have to educate us forcibly by events rather than by abstract ideas, in the near future as in similar crises in the past.

Marx as a prophet of doom has done his work. He has destroyed but cannot create. He can hate but cannot love. A whole sixth of our troubled world, which has put us to shame by its socialization in pursuit of justice, is for the moment in deep need. The Russians cannot cease creating fresh enemies which they must in turn hate and destroy.

Now if we are true followers of Christ, realistic, revolutionary Christians, if spiritually, socially and economically we are twice-born men, *we have the way*. There can be no Christian economic or political party in capitalist countries. There is no "Christian way" that holds a miraculous panacea by the repetition of the shibboleths "love and brotherhood," though the ascetic in his cell thinks he has it. We have no Christian alternative to communism, or socialism, or any other secular system. Our patchwork palliatives never touch our own privileges and our own class, or approach the standard of equal justice for all. Yet there is a way which every revolutionary individual Christian or group can take.

Full soon Attila will be at the gates of our Rome, of our earthly city and system. It must fall as surely as Augustine's Rome fell, or slavery, or feudalism. But beyond we must behold the vision of the City of God. We must still seek to

“build Jerusalem in England’s green and pleasant land.” We must pass judgment and call for reform and justice while there is yet time in the more raw and ruthless capitalism of America, and in the divided democracies of our disintegrating social order. God’s judgment is upon our monstrous modern world as truly as upon Babylon or Rome, and like them we are weighed in the balance and found wanting.

“Behold I work a work in your day which you will in no wise believe. Behold I create and I destroy. I judge and I redeem. I have come to cast fire on the earth. I come to bring not peace but a sword. And a man’s foes shall be those of his own household. I have a baptism to be baptized with — an agonizing crucifixion to undergo — and how am I straitened till it be accomplished.

“Bring me no more vain oblations of ceremonial worship, nor call me ‘Lord, Lord.’ The cup of the iniquity of your soul-destroying system is full to the brim. Behold, *your* hands are full of blood. *Your* poor have been despoiled.

“*Today* again is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears: ‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor; to declare deliverance to captives; to set at liberty them that are bruised.’

“The Kingdom of God is even now at hand — a Kingdom of justice, of liberty, of abundance and of brotherhood for all. Whom shall I send and who will go for us to be fellow workers in the bringing in of this Kingdom?”

We may close our study as Albert Schweitzer closes his *Quest of the Historical Jesus* with these significant words: “He comes to us as one unknown, without a name, as of old, by the lakeside, he came to those men who knew him not. He speaks to us the same words: ‘Follow thou me!’ and sets us to the tasks which he has to fulfill for our time. He commands. And to those who obey him, whether they be wise or simple, he will reveal himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings, which they shall pass through in his fellowship, and, as an ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience who he is.”

But the last word, and the first, for every believer in the God and Father of Jesus is this:

Repent, for the Kingdom of God is *at hand*.

NOTES

¹ We have shown that by dialectic we mean the creation and resolution of opposing forces. The advance is through a positive thesis to a negative antithesis and finally to a uniting synthesis. Any situation is dialectic when it produces from its inner structural necessity contradictions which lead on to some new situation in which these contradictions can be resolved. We saw that Karl Marx derived his dialectic philosophy from Hegel through Feuerbach, who sought to interpret Christianity in terms of pure, nontheistic humanism founded upon the single principle of love.

² *Creative Society*, pp. 143-69.

³ "And blood gushed out as high as a horse's bridle for the space of two hundred miles." (Rev. 14:20; 16:1-21. Moffatt's translation.)

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